

8-1-2024

Human Rights Violations Against Legal Immigrants in Minnesota

John Ewu
Walden University

Follow this and additional works at: <https://scholarworks.waldenu.edu/dissertations>



Part of the [Public Policy Commons](#)

This Dissertation is brought to you for free and open access by the Walden Dissertations and Doctoral Studies Collection at ScholarWorks. It has been accepted for inclusion in Walden Dissertations and Doctoral Studies by an authorized administrator of ScholarWorks. For more information, please contact ScholarWorks@waldenu.edu.

Walden University

College of Health Sciences and Public Policy

This is to certify that the doctoral dissertation by

John E. Ewu

has been found to be complete and satisfactory in all respects,
and that any and all revisions required by
the review committee have been made.

Review Committee

Dr. Lynn Wilson, Committee Chairperson,
Public Policy and Administration Faculty

Dr. Raj Singh, Committee Member,
Public Policy and Administration Faculty

Chief Academic Officer and Provost
Sue Subocz, Ph.D.

Walden University
2024

Abstract

Human Rights Violations Against Legal Immigrants in Minnesota

by

John E. Ewu

MA, Walden University, 2021

MA, The Catholic University of Eastern Africa, 2016

BA, Pontificia Universitas Urbaniana, 2009

Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

Public Policy and Administration

Walden University

August 2024

Abstract

Despite legal entitlements to protections under the International Bill of Human Rights, legal immigrants in Minnesota face human rights violations, including discrimination, harassment, and denial of essential services. These violations hinder their well-being, social integration, and economic stability, exacerbate existing disparities, and their ability to provide for their families and secure legal representation. The purpose of this study was to provide information that could be used in considering policy reforms to improve the treatment of immigrants in Minnesota. This was achieved by exploring how Mexican, Somali, and Hmong legal immigrants experienced human rights violations in Minnesota as a vulnerable population and using the knowledge gained from participants' responses to propose policy recommendations. Fineman's vulnerability theory served as the theoretical framework of the study. Purposive sampling was used to recruit 20 participants, all in Minnesota: three focus groups of five Somali, Mexican, and Hmong immigrants and five individual interviews with two immigration advocates and three human rights experts. The study was conducted using qualitative phenomenological methodology, and inductive thematic analysis was used to analyze the data. The results included (a) experiences of educational discrimination, (b) experiences of workplace discrimination, (c) experiences of racial profiling and negative stereotyping, (d) experiences of housing discrimination, (e) culture and language barriers make immigrants vulnerable to human rights violations, (f) legal system complexity and lack of awareness on how to navigate the complex legal environment, and (g) fear of reporting abuses and violations. The findings aimed to inform immigration policy reforms in Minnesota.

Human Rights Violations Against Legal Immigrants in Minnesota

by

John Eko Ewu

MA, Walden University 2021

MA, The Catholic University of Eastern Africa, 2016

BA, Pontificia Universitas Urbaniana, 2009

Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

Public Policy and Administration

Walden University

August 2024

Dedication

In profound gratitude and reverence, I dedicate this dissertation to God, whose boundless grace has illuminated my academic journey, guiding me through challenges and triumphs alike. To my beloved parents, Ephraim Ewu and Pauline Lokenye, whose unwavering love, guidance, and selfless sacrifices paved the path to this scholarly pursuit, may their souls rest in God's eternal peace. And to the countless immigrants enduring human rights injustices worldwide, may this work stand as a testament to their resilience, and may they find solace, dignity, and compassion in their quest for a brighter tomorrow.

Acknowledgments

First and foremost, I acknowledge the boundless grace of God Almighty, whose guidance and providence have been the cornerstone of my academic journey. To my late parents, who planted the seeds of education in my soul from an early age, I owe you a debt of gratitude that words cannot fully express. Your unwavering belief in the power of education continues to inspire me every day.

To my beloved wife, Margaret Waithira, your steady support, understanding, and gentle smile have been my refuge throughout this endeavor. Your encouragement has been the wind beneath my wings, propelling me forward even in the face of challenges. To my son, Ahadi Ewu, your innocent joy and bright spirit have been a source of inspiration. Your presence has infused my days with purpose, reminding me of the importance of perseverance and determination. To my siblings, Linda Ewu and Mark Ewu, your love, understanding, and encouragement have been a source of strength. Your belief in me never wavered, and for that, I am eternally grateful. To my mother-in-law, Jenifer Kinuthia, whose prayers, encouragement, and understanding provided solace and peace of mind during the most challenging moments, I offer my heartfelt appreciation.

To my academic mentors, Dr. Lynn Wilson and Dr. Raj Singh, your patience, guidance, and unwavering support have been invaluable. Your commitment to excellence has shaped this research and elevated its quality to new heights. Finally, I extend my sincerest thanks to all the research participants whose generosity in sharing their experiences and time made this study possible.

Table of Contents

List of Tables	viii
List of Figures	ix
Chapter 1: Introduction to the Study.....	1
Introduction.....	1
Background to the Study.....	3
Problem Statement	6
Purpose Statement.....	7
Research Question.....	8
Theoretical Framework of the Study	9
Nature of the Study	10
Definitions.....	11
Assumptions.....	13
Scope and Delimitations	14
Limitations	14
Significance of the Study	16
Summary	16
Chapter 2: Literature Review	18
Introduction.....	18
Literature Search Strategy.....	19
Theoretical Framework	19
Fineman’s Vulnerability Theory	20

Review of Literature	23
The Philosophical Tradition of Phenomenology	23
A Synopsis of Human Rights Violation on Legal Immigrants in Minnesota	25
The Legal Protection of Immigrants and Their Vulnerabilities in Host Countries	26
The Selected Immigrant Populations Under Study in Minnesota.....	29
Mexican Immigrants	29
Somali Immigrants	31
Hmong Immigrants	34
Perceived Structural Vulnerabilities of Legal Immigrants in Minnesota	36
Discrimination.....	38
Financial Insecurity.....	39
Access to Healthcare.....	40
English Language Proficiency	43
Housing Affordability.....	45
Immigration Detention.....	47
Initiating and Escalating Factors of Human Rights Violations on Legal Immigrants in Minnesota	48
President Trump’s Administrative Inconsistencies With the Rule of Law.....	49
Separating Families.....	50
Gutting Asylum Laws	51
Terminating DACA.....	53

Attacks on Sanctuary Cities	55
The Invocation of Title 42 – 1944 Public Health Services Act	57
Congressional Failure to Modify Long-standing Immigration Pathways to the United States	59
The IBHR.....	61
U.S. Commitment to the ICESCR	65
The Nature of Human Rights Violations Against Legal Immigrants in Minnesota.....	68
Discrimination in Employment	68
Disparities in Access to High Quality Education	70
Housing Affordability	71
Disparities in Health and Wellbeing	73
Disparities in Arrest, Detention, Access to Legal Representation, and Deportation.....	75
Impacts of Human Rights Violations on Legal Immigrants in Minnesota	77
Health and Well-Being.....	77
Limited Access to Meaningful Employment	79
Poor Housing Conditions.....	80
Educational Success	81
Summary and Transition	82
Chapter 3: Research Method.....	84
Introduction.....	84

Research Design and Rationale.....	85
Research Question.....	87
Role of the Researcher	87
Methodology.....	88
Participant Selection Logic	88
Instrumentation	93
Data Collection Procedure	94
Data Analysis Plan	95
Issues of Trustworthiness.....	100
Credibility	100
Transferability.....	101
Dependability (Reliability)	102
Confirmability.....	102
Ethical Procedures.....	103
Summary and Transition	104
Chapter 4: Results	106
Introduction.....	106
Setting.....	106
Demographics	109
Data Collection	110
Data Analysis	112
Overview of Findings From Individual Interviews	113

Overview of Findings From Focus Group Discussions	114
Evidence of Trustworthiness.....	116
Credibility	117
Transferability.....	117
Dependability.....	118
Confirmability.....	119
Results.....	120
Theme 1: Experiences of Educational Discrimination	120
Theme 2: Experiences of Workplace Discrimination	124
Theme 3: Experiences of Racial Profiling and Negative Stereotyping	132
Theme 4 - Experiences of Housing Discrimination.....	138
Theme 5: Culture and Language Barriers Make Immigrants Vulnerable to Human Rights Violations.....	145
Theme 6: Legal System Complexity and Legal Immigrants’ Lack of Awareness on How to Navigate the Complex Legal Environment	156
Theme 7: Fear of Reporting Abuses and Violations.....	160
Summary	164
Chapter 5: Discussion, Conclusions, and Recommendations.....	166
Introduction.....	166
Interpretation of Findings.....	167
Experiences of Educational Discrimination.....	168
Workplace Discrimination	170

Theme 3: Experiences of Racial Profiling and Negative Stereotyping	173
Theme 4 - Experiences of Housing Discrimination.....	174
Theme 5: Culture and Language Barriers Make Immigrants Vulnerable to Human Rights Violations.....	176
Theme 6: Legal System Complexity and Legal Immigrants' Lack of Awareness on How to Navigate the Complex Legal Environment	178
Theme 7: Fear of Reporting Abuses and Violations.....	180
Limitations of the Study.....	182
Recommendations.....	185
Recommendations for Action	185
Recommendation for Further Research	188
Implications.....	189
Social Change	190
Social Wellbeing	190
Theory	191
Practice.....	192
Conclusion	193
References.....	195
Appendix A: Codebook	218
Appendix B: CITI Certificate	256
Appendix C: List of Acronyms.....	257
Appendix D: Focus Group Discussion Guide.....	259

Appendix E: Semistructured Interview Protocol261

List of Tables

Table 1. Themes, Subthemes, Categories, and Codes	98
Table 2. Participants' Demographic Data	110

List of Figures

Figure 1. An Overview of Findings From the Individual Interviews 113

Figure 2. An Overview of Perceptions From Focus Group Discussions 114

Chapter 1: Introduction to the Study

Introduction

Human rights violations against immigrants are conjoined with policies and edicts that strip immigrants of their rights and exclude them from the wider human community. For most migrants, the thought of migrating to a developed country is usually pleasant, with the hope for security, social and economic advantages. This hope, however, tends to dissipate as most migrants become the subject of human rights violations in host countries. The principles established in the International Bill of Human Rights (IBHR) oblige states to protect human rights against all forms of abuse and to fulfill the rights necessary for all persons to live a dignified and secure life (Lougarre, 2020). However, the journey to find safety and social and economic emancipation often throws migrants out of the spectrum of humanity, with their human dignity stripped away, without human rights, without protection, and without worth (Chambers, 2017).

While the IBHR reaffirms the fundamental significance of respecting, protecting, and fulfilling the human rights of immigrants in policy and practice, the policies are not uniformly ratified or implemented across countries. This is partly because the international community fails to provide uniform standards and a clear guidance on how to implement human rights (Alberto & Klaus, 2019). Article 2(1) of the ICESCR gives states a wide range of discretion in selecting the steps considered most appropriate for the full realization of economic social and cultural rights (Manisuli, 2011). As a result, for most states, including the United States, the responsibility to implement universal human

rights principles rests on the state, which in most cases, must choose between national interest and upholding immigrants' rights.

In Minnesota, Mexican, Somali, and Hmong immigrants are often faced with a plethora of challenges originating from sociostructural factors that curtail their safety and limit their opportunities to integrate into the United States (Bourgois et al., 2017).

According to Libal et al. (2021), apart from hindering the entry of legal immigrants into the United States during the COVID-19 pandemic, legal immigrants in the United States experienced overt and covert forms of exclusions from the labor market due to high unemployment rates and economic hardship, with new exclusionary policies targeting legal immigrants who are eligible to work. When migration policies and procedures support and add to a logic of marginalization and criminalization of migrants, xenophobic perceptions and behaviors might become more prevalent (Libal et al., 2021).

To address immigrants' human rights violations in the United States, scholars and human rights organizations have focused their attention on highlighting the vulnerabilities of undocumented immigrants, urging for adherence to international human rights standards for humane treatments (Schmidt, 2019). The violations of human rights against legal immigrants in Minnesota were not demonstrated in the reviewed literature. This study aimed to add to the body of literature on human rights violations for legal immigrants. The findings of this study have potential implications for positive social change by providing information that could contribute to policy reform considerations to improve the treatment of legal immigrants in Minnesota. In this chapter, a background is provided to contextualize the study. The problem statement, the purpose of the study, and

the research question are also described. The theoretical framework and the nature of the study are briefly explained. Key terms used throughout the study are clarified, and some assumptions in conducting the study are noted. The scope, delimitations, and limitations of the study are defined. Lastly, the significance of the study as it relates to social change, welfare, and well-being is explained, followed by a chapter summary to conclude Chapter 1.

Background to the Study

Despite the adoption and approval of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in 1948, which outlined universal, fundamental human rights, by the UN General Assembly and a majority of its members, it remains eminently aspirational and not enforceable. States have always asserted their sovereign rights and the responsibility to protect the rights of their citizens over the acknowledgement of universal human rights. This has rendered stateless persons and many migrants who are seeking refuge in different countries almost “rightless.” Once in a state of rightlessness, immigrants become susceptible to verbal dehumanization and exclusion from perceived human society, setting them up for segregation, detention, undue legal process, and eventually deportation (Schmidt, 2019). Migrants in most cases are easily deprived of the right to life and human dignity. The United States Border Patrol recorded approximately 70,505 deaths of migrants attempting to enter the United States from Mexico between 1998-2018 with no one being held accountable (Tsuchiya et al., 2021).

According to Quintavalla and Heine (2019), the full enjoyment of human dignity requires the respect and protection of all human rights, as any violation of human rights

would lead to a fundamental denial of inherent human dignity. From the ashes of the Second World War, the indivisible and universal nature of human rights was irrefutable in the expansion of international human rights law (Donnelly, 2013), and are essential attributes that form the legal context for human rights:

All human rights are universal, indivisible, and interdependent, and interrelated. The international community must treat human rights globally in a fair and equal manner, on the same footing, and with the same emphasis. While the significance of national and regional particularities and various historical, cultural, and religious backgrounds must be borne in mind, it is the duty of States, regardless of their political, economic, and cultural systems, to promote and protect all human rights and fundamental freedoms. (United Nations, 1993, para. 5)

The atrocities committed during the Second World War called for international cooperation to foster and respect fundamental human rights. In 1948 the United Nations General Assembly adopted the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR), marking a formal codification of human rights (Easley et al., 2001). This was followed by the adoption of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) and the International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights (ICESCR) in 1966. These three documents (UDHR, the ICCPR, and the ICESCR) form what is currently known as the IBHR (Dion, 2001).

Kabasakal Arat (2006) opined that the political system initiated by the UN Charter was one that redefined interstate relationships, as well as the relationship between states and individuals. Human rights obligation was later expanded by the ICCPR and the

ICESCR, which created a human rights regime for the entire humanity. Since the adoption of the UDHR and subsequent treaties and covenants by the United Nations, the concept of human rights has witnessed various advancements, with little progress in universal applicability for the improvement of human rights conditions for immigrants (Kabasakal Arat, 2006). For several decades, the United States has experienced unprecedented increase in immigration enforcement including arrest, detention, undue process, and deportation. The detention of immigrants has a direct impact on their lives and the lives of their family members, limiting their choices, options for security, decision-making, and integration in the United States (Tsuchiya et al., 2021). These horizontal inequalities are a result of the hierarchical social echelons and power relations harnessed by practices and policies that govern the legal status of an individual (Bourgois et al., 2017).

According to Patler Golash-Boza (2017), immigrants under detention experience different forms of vulnerability that affect different aspects of their lives and the lives of their family members. The arrest and detention of legal immigrants in Minnesota for reasons such as being noisy in a hotel room and for snow blocking a number plate demonstrate how racial profiling contributes to unfair treatment of immigrants by state troopers and other service providers (Tsuchiya et al., 2021). Most legal immigrants plead their cases in Minnesota immigration courts on grounds of financial responsibilities including support for their parents and children with severe health conditions, unborn or young children, and pregnant partners (Cartwright, 2011). This indicates that holding immigrants in detention for an extended period can have severe health and financial

consequences on the detainee and their family. This study highlights the factors that initiate and escalate human rights violations on legal immigrants in Minnesota. The study provides an understanding of the nature and impact of human rights violation on legal immigrants in Minnesota, and how such violations can be curbed by the State of Minnesota using international and domestic principles of human rights.

Problem Statement

The implementation of United States Customs and Border Protection policy, the invocation of 1944 Public Health Service Act -Title 42, unprecedented increase in federal immigration enforcement policies, detention, and deportation of immigrants without due process, has increased racial profiling, border killings, and denial of due process rights, for many legal immigrants in Minnesota (Boyle, 2018; Chambers, 2017; Schmidt, 2019; Tsuchiya et al., 2021). Despite being legally entitled to certain human rights protections, legal immigrants in Minnesota continue to face various human rights violations. These violations range from discrimination and harassment to denial of basic services such as healthcare and education (Tsuchiya et al., 2021). Such violations not only impact the well-being and dignity of legal immigrants and their families but also pose serious challenges to their social and economic integration, exacerbating existing disparities and inequalities. (Tsuchiya et al., 2021). Human rights violations also impact legal immigrants by limiting their ability to access and afford adequate health care, raise bond fees, and obtain appropriate legal representation (Schmidt, 2019).

Although researchers have investigated human rights violations in relation to undocumented immigrants, none of the studies reviewed literature examined how legal

immigrants of Hispanic, African, and Asian descents experience human rights violations in Minnesota. Therefore, there was a pressing need to investigate the nature, scope, and underlying causes of these human rights violations against legal immigrants in Minnesota and to identify effective strategies to prevent and address them. The continued human rights violations against legal immigrants in Minnesota, and the apathy of the State and federal government to address the situation was the dominant problem statement for this study. This study contributes to existing literature by advancing an understanding of how legal immigrants of Mexican, Somali, and Hmong descent experience human rights violations in Minnesota and promoting positive social change in the treatment of legal immigrants.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this study was to use the knowledge gained from participants' responses through individual interviews and focus group discussions to provide information that may contribute to policy reforms considerations to improve the treatment of legal immigrants, by exploring how legal immigrants of Mexican, Somali, and Hmong descents experiences human rights violations in Minnesota. While recognizing the right to leave one's country of origin, international human rights law does not guarantee the right to enter another country, without that state's authorization. Hence, a state's determination that a migrant entered the country without authorization, does not intrinsically conflict with human rights principles. However, the fact that a migrant entered or remained in a state without authorization does not nullify the state's

duty under international law to protect his or her basic rights against torture, degrading treatment, rights to due process, forced labor and discrimination.

For many legal immigrants, the everyday reality is a struggle to earn a living in dire working conditions, to find housing in which they can live in minimal comfort, to stay healthy or risk deportation if they visit a health clinic, to find some way of educating their children when schools are barred to them (Guchteneire et al., 2009). These challenges impact the wellbeing and welfare of immigrants as they strive to adapt in their host communities.

Research Question

The research question for this study was as follows: How do legal immigrants of Mexican, Somali, and Hmong descent experience human rights violations in Minnesota as a vulnerable population?

This research question was highly pertinent for this study as it delves into the experiences of three significant immigrant groups representing the main racial demographics of Minnesota's immigrant population. By concentrating on legal immigrants of Mexican, Somali, and Hmong descent, the study addressed the unique challenges faced by the predominant immigrant communities in Minnesota: Latinos, Asians, and Africans, respectively. These groups are not only numerically significant but also culturally and socio-politically distinct, offering a diverse spectrum of experiences and perspectives on human rights issues. This diversity was crucial for understanding the broader context of human rights violations against immigrants in Minnesota, as it allowed for in-depth analysis across different communities, shedding light on the systemic nature

of these violations. Furthermore, focusing on legal immigrants added a unique dimension to the discourse, often overshadowed by the emphasis on undocumented immigrants. It challenged the assumption that legality assures protection from human rights abuses, thereby enriching the understanding of the complexities and nuances in the field of human rights within immigrant communities.

Theoretical Framework of the Study

Fineman's vulnerability theory served as the theoretical framework of this study. Fineman focused on societal institutions and how they respond to the challenges of vulnerability (as cited in Baumgärtel, 2020). Fineman's concept of vulnerability lays emphasis on the constant, particular, complex, and universal nature of vulnerability in human conditions. The dominant thesis of Fineman's vulnerability theory is that all human beings are vulnerable and predisposed to dependency, and the state has a corresponding obligation to reduce, improve, and compensate for that vulnerability (as cited in Kohn, 2014). Fineman maintained that faced with neoliberal pressure, resilient subjects can only be produced in a responsive state (as cited in Davis & Aldieri, 2021).

The hallmark of Fineman's concept of vulnerability is arguably the establishment of a responsive state (Baumgärtel, 2020); a state that meets its obligation to respond to human vulnerability by providing equal access to the societal institutions, that distribute social goods such as healthcare, employment, and security (Kohn, 2014). In Fineman's perspective, formal equality approach is deficient for its inadequacy to address gross and growing economic and material injustice (as cited in Baumgärtel, 2020). Formal equality concentrates on eliminating discrimination against historically disadvantaged groups

rather than eliminating the disparities to which those groups were subjected (Kohn, 2014). Focusing on the experiences of human rights violations against legal immigrants of Mexican, Somali, and Hmong descent in Minnesota, Fineman's vulnerability theory served as an appropriate theoretical framework to guide this study.

Nature of the Study

This study was a qualitative phenomenological study that explored the experiences of human rights violations against legal immigrants of Mexican, Somali, and Hmong descent in Minnesota. The purpose of this study was to use the knowledge gained from participants' responses through individual interviews and focus group discussions to provide information that may contribute to policy reforms considerations to improve the treatment of legal immigrants, by exploring how legal immigrants of Mexican, Somali, and Hmong descents experiences human rights violations in Minnesota.

The study was conducted using individual interviews and focus group discussions. Purposive sampling was used to select twenty participants for the study. The study participants consisted of 15 legal immigrants, selected with the use of gatekeepers. The 15 participants participated in three focus group discussions: five from each of the three immigrant populations in Minnesota; the Somali, Mexican, and Hmong. Other study participants included two immigration advocates and three human rights experts who participated in individual interviews. Individual interviews were all conducted in-person to collect primary data. These participants were identified by codes to protect their personal data from being exposed to the public (see O'Sullivan et al., 2017).

The two immigration advocates and three human rights experts served as key informants, participating only in individual interviews and not in the focus group discussions. These five individuals were not members of the three communities under study, and were purposefully selected based on their profession, expertise, experience as immigration advocates, and their ability to provide data relating to immigration and human rights principles. The focus group participants were specifically selected from the three communities under study. Each group met separately with me to provide data relating to their experience of human rights violations as legal immigrants.

Inductive thematic analysis was used to record patterns among the three groups (Mexicans, Somalis, and Hmong) of legal immigrants involved in the study. Inductive thematic analysis is a widely used method in qualitative research, where the researcher seeks to understand participants' subjective experiences and perspectives. This approach involves systematically identifying, analyzing, and interpreting patterns or themes within the data, without preconceived categories or themes from the research question or theoretical frameworks. Themes emerge directly from the data through an iterative process of data familiarization, coding, categorization, theming, and analysis (Braun et al., 2019; Campbell et al., 2021).

Definitions

Asylum seeker: A person who seeks safety from persecution or serious harm in a country other than their own and awaits a decision on the application for refugee status under relevant international and national instruments. In case of a negative decision, the

person must leave the country and may be expelled, unless permission to stay is provided on humanitarian grounds (Castelli, 2018, p. 2).

Human rights: According to the United Nations (n.d.), human rights are rights inherent to all human beings, regardless of race, sex, nationality, ethnicity, language, religion, or any other status. Human rights include the right to life and liberty, freedom from slavery and torture, freedom of opinion and expression, the right to work and education, and many more. Everyone is entitled to these rights, without discrimination (United Nations, n.d).

Human rights violations: In this study, human rights violations constitute any action or inaction, which deprives a person of any of his or her legal rights as contemplated in both IBHR, and domestic laws. Such violations include but are not limited to torture, cruel or degrading treatment or punishment; slavery and forced labor; arbitrary arrest or detention; arbitrary interference with privacy; war propaganda; discrimination; and advocacy of racial or religious hatred (United Nations, n.d.).

Legal immigrants: Legal immigrants in this study referred to noncitizen immigrants in the United States with permanent status, temporary statuses, and discretionary statuses (Tsuchiya et al., 2021). According to National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine (2015), permanent status is the strongest anchor the law provides because it allows labor mobility, confers significant constitutional rights and access to some public benefits, and can lead to naturalization provided that the LPR meets a set of additional requirements. Temporary statuses include a variety of employment-based and humanitarian-based admissions that confer lawful presence for

limited periods of time, which are subject to review by Congress (National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine, 2015). Discretionary statuses grant temporary lawful status via executive discretion and as such can be terminated at any time.

Although discretionary statuses provide temporary protection from removal, provided that holders meet certain requirements related to behavior and practices, these statuses grant the least degree of formal security (National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine, 2015).

Refugee: A person who, owing to a well-founded fear of persecution for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinions, is outside the country of his nationality and is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail himself or herself of the protection of that country (Geneva Convention, 1951, Art. 1A).

Assumptions

In conducting this study, I assumed that human rights violations were a phenomenon experienced by some legal immigrants of Mexican, Somali, and Hmong descent in Minnesota. I also assumed that all the research participants would voluntarily participate and would not be coerced in any way to participate. I further assumed that all participants would be sufficiently familiar with the concept of human rights violations against legal immigrants in Minnesota so that they could reliably provide rich data from their experiences on the subject matter. I equally assumed that all the research participants had personal experiences, or had witnessed, or had been involved in activities that advocated for the protection of human rights. I assumed that all participants would be

truthful and unbiased in their responses during the interviews and focus group discussions.

Scope and Delimitations

The sample selection included immigration advocates, human rights experts, and legal immigrants from the Mexican, Somali, and Hmong populations in Minnesota. The legal immigrants were selected based on their number of years living in Minnesota and their age. All participants from the Mexican, Somali, and Hmong immigrant populations were at least 25 years old and had lived in Minnesota for at least 5 years. All immigration advocates participating in the study were residents of Minnesota with at least 3 years of experience working with immigrants on various cases of human rights violations. Human rights experts participating in the study were not required to be residents of Minnesota. The three groups of research participants provided their perspectives on the phenomenon under study. Transcripts of individual interviews and focus group discussions were made available to participants upon request to minimize my personal biases. The results of the study were also made available to participants, upon request, for review before they were reported in the study. The findings and recommendations of this study aimed to influence further research in the study area that addresses human rights violations against legal immigrants and inform policy changes regarding the treatment of legal immigrants.

Limitations

Several limitations were noted in this research. Using a phenomenological approach, the sample size of the study was small, including five participants each from the Mexican, Somali, and Hmong population for focus groups, three human rights

experts, and two immigration advocates. The generalizability of the results from this qualitative phenomenological research was limited due to the use of purposive and snowball sampling methods. These methods resulted in a small sample size that is typically not representative enough for broad generalizations. Language barriers were considered as limitations that could negatively impact the richness of the data as English is not a first language for Mexican, Somali, and Hmong immigrant populations. All my participants spoke sufficient English to participate fully in the study. Also, participants could provide incomplete responses of their experiences due to difficulties in expressing themselves in the English language. Gaining access to the research participants was challenging as I did not have any personal relationships with any one from the identified immigrant populations, the advocates, and the policy analysts. To overcome this limitation, key contacts in my network were used to gain access to the research participants suitable to provide rich in-depth data for the study.

Another worry was whether participants would offer responses shaped to simply comply with the process of the focus group discussion or align with prevailing news or peer narratives, rather than sharing their genuine personal experiences. This issue was mitigated by selectively choosing members for focus group discussions who demonstrated critical and independent thinking. I screened potential participants during my initial interactions, evaluating their capacity for independent thought and their readiness to share distinct perspectives. Being an immigrant myself, my positionality and personal experiences could also influence the interpretation of collected data, so I

consciously remained objective throughout the study to provide unbiased interpretation of collected data and research findings.

Significance of the Study

Minnesota has attracted large numbers of immigrants, particularly Mexican, Somali, and Hmong populations, as well as economic immigrants and asylum seekers from across the world, making Minnesota's immigrant population more culturally diverse than the national immigrant population (Wasem, 2020). This cultural diversity is accompanied by incidents of human rights violations on legal immigrants which makes Minnesota an ideal location for this study. This research was crucial because migration trends are evolving and impacting the connection between immigrant populations and human rights principles, yet there was little or no substantial research to back up these changes especially as it related to legal immigrants (de Haas et al., 2019). This study explored the experiences of human rights violations as faced by legal immigrants in Minnesota, hoping to contribute to policy reforms that would improve the treatment of immigrants in host countries.

Summary

In Chapter 1, I provided a description of the topic under investigation, the importance of conducting the study, and the potential benefits to society. I introduced contemporary challenges faced by legal immigrants in host countries, with a specific focus on Minnesota. In the background of the study, I articulated key human rights developments by the international community were highlighted, and the problem statement, purpose statement, and research question guiding the study. A brief

explanation of Fineman's vulnerability theory was presented to serve as the theoretical framework grounding the study. The nature of the study was briefly described, highlighting an outline of the methodology, research design, and the sample selection for the study, which is expounded upon in Chapter 3. Definitions of some key terms, which were consistently used throughout the study, were also provided. Assumptions, scope and delimitations, limitations, and the significance of the study were highlighted. In Chapter 2, a review of existing literature in the study area and the theoretical framework of the study are provided.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

Introduction

While most immigrants look forward to entering into the United States to live the “American Dream,” the American Dream could also mean a living nightmare for many migrants, who even after acquiring a legal status to live in the United States, continue to experience human rights violations (Tsuchiya et al., 2021). This literature review will develop a better picture of the lived experiences of human rights violations against legal immigrants in Minnesota. The purpose of this study was to use the knowledge gained from participants’ responses through individual interviews and focus group discussions to provide information that may contribute to policy reforms considerations to improve the treatment of immigrants in host countries, by exploring how legal immigrants of Mexican, Somali, and Hmong descents experiences human rights violations in Minnesota.

The implementation of U.S. immigration policies like the Customs and Border Protection policy, the unprecedented increase in federal immigration enforcement policies, detention, and deportation of immigrants without due process increased racial profiling and denial of due process rights for many legal immigrants in Minnesota (Tsuchiya et al., 2021). This situation continues to impact legal immigrants by limiting their ability to access adequate health care, and their ability to provide for their families, raise bond fees, and obtain appropriate legal representation (Tsuchiya et al., 2021). In this chapter, I review information regarding the lived experiences of human rights violations against Mexican, Somali, and Hmong legal immigrants living in Minnesota. I also review

possible reasons why legal immigrants continued to experience human rights violations in Minnesota.

Literature Search Strategy

This study's literature was reviewed through the search of public policy and administration databases using certain keywords and phrases. The databases used included ProQuest Central, Political Science Complete, SocINDEX, Taylor and Francis Criminal Justice, Academic Search Complete, as well as ERIC, EBSCO, Google Scholar, and Thoreau. Other databases searched were Dissertations & Theses at Walden University, and ProQuest Dissertations and Theses Global. Key phrases like *human rights violations*, *international bill of human rights*, *legal immigrants*, *immigration*, *United States immigration policies and practices*, and *resources for legal immigrants in Minnesota* were employed in regularly crafted text-based inquiries and search assertions as part of the search strategy. These terms and phrases were chosen and used in each literary project focusing upon indexing, vocabulary keywords, or similar index and categorization phrases. The literature gathered was derived from scholarly journals and articles published mainly between 2018 to 2023. However, some selected articles were published earlier but were used because they provided foundational and historical information to the study.

Theoretical Framework

Racial profiling, border deaths, and deprivation of procedural safeguards have all increased against immigrants in the last decade due to federal immigration enforcement tactics, particularly border enforcement operations by Customs and Border Patrol

officials (CBP; Menjívar et al., 2018). This study was be guided by Fineman's perspectives of vulnerability theory (as cited in Baumgärtel, 2020).

Fineman's Vulnerability Theory

According to Fineman (2019), the discourse on human vulnerability must be focused on what we share as humans, our expectations of the law and the fundamental social structure, and the relationships that shape society and affect the lives of everyone. Fineman's vulnerability lays emphasis on the universal nature of vulnerability in human conditions (Baumgärtel, 2020). The dominant thesis of Fineman's vulnerability theory is that all human beings are vulnerable and predisposed to dependency, and the state has a corresponding obligation to reduce, improve, and compensate for that vulnerability (Kohn, 2014). Without prescribing a specific form of state organization, vulnerability theory urges that states should be responsive to universal human needs and the reorganization of many existing structures, which are currently based on a conception of legal order that unduly value individual liberty and choice without paying attention to the realities of human vulnerability and dependency (Fineman, 2019). Faced with neoliberal pressure, Fineman maintained that resilient subjects can only be produced in a responsive state (as cited in Davis & Aldieri, 2021).

Fineman (2010) identified four key elements of vulnerability: constancy, particularity, universality, and complexity. On the constancy of dependency on others, vulnerability is understood as a state of constant possibility of harm that is eminent. And because vulnerability is constant, humans inevitably depend on each other and on the state to respond to their social needs (Fineman, 2010). While dependent on their

immigrant population to integrate in their new environment, immigrants are particularly vulnerable and depend on the state respond to their social, economic, and cultural needs. On the particularity of the human condition, vulnerability theory holds that humans differ in their embodiment and social location within webs of economic and institutional relationships. Thus, having a different phenotype or social status can change how people are treated (Fineman, 2010). This is widely experienced by immigrant populations in host countries where their physical, mental, and intellectual variations often lead to discrimination, racial and gender disparities, and the subsequent creation of hierarchies and violation of human rights. On the other hand, access to resources for addressing human vulnerability, such as childcare, food, insurance, employment opportunities, and more, is largely dependent on one's social location. These variations cause each human being to experience vulnerability in a particular way, with immigrants being more vulnerable as they struggle with the challenges of integration in their host countries.

The universality aspect of Fineman's vulnerability theory is based upon her envisioning all humans as having the shared condition of being vulnerable irrespective of their social status (Fineman, 2019). She contended that in defining the term human, vulnerability is an unavoidable concept. The complexity of vulnerability lies in the ability of its manifestation in a multiplicity of forms. Suffering a physical harm or injury may have multiple effects on personal and institutional relationships (Fineman, 2010). The second-level harm to relationships with others and institutions can take many forms; economic or social and can have intergenerational repercussions (Kohn, 2014). The lack of access to basic social and economic needs like healthcare, housing, education,

meaningful employment, and the rights to due process, makes it difficult for legal immigrants in Minnesota to integrate and provide for their family. This can have adverse effects on their children in the long run, especially if they lack access to education.

The core argument of Fineman's vulnerability theory is that humans are unstable and susceptible to reliance on the state, so the sovereign has a responsibility to mitigate, alleviate, and compensate for this vulnerability. The seal of Fineman's vulnerability is arguably the establishment of a responsive state (Baumgärtel, 2020); a state that meets its obligation to respond to human vulnerability by providing equal access to the societal institutions, that distribute social goods such as healthcare, employment, and security (Kohn, 2014). In either society, nobody can prove preventing injuries, disease, and all negative personal experiences, Fineman's thesis implicitly asserts that it is neither right nor reasonable to anticipate that simply equal treatment can meet individuals' needs (Kohn, 2014). Resilience shift is based on access to resilience-building institutions, upon which individuals are reliant. In Fineman's perspective, formal equality approach is deficient for its failure to address gross and growing economic and material injustice (Baumgärtel, 2020). Formal equality concentrates on eliminating discrimination against historically disadvantaged groups rather than eliminating the disparities to which those groups were subjected (Kohn, 2014).

While vulnerability theory certainly addresses many of the inequities experienced by disenfranchised individuals, it lays emphasis on the disproportionate impact of social institutions like, education, housing, health care, and employment, that shape people's ability to cope and succeed with vulnerability (Fineman & Fineman, 2018). Fineman

opined that the government should give accessibility to social organizations that redistribute expected benefits like healthcare, education, housing, and protection to fulfill their commitment to adapt to compassion (Baumgärtel, 2020). This commitment, according to Fineman, seems compatible with the nation's primary purpose to deal with human vulnerability.

Review of Literature

The Philosophical Tradition of Phenomenology

Phenomenology, as developed by Husserl and later expanded by Heidegger, is a philosophical tradition that focuses on the structures of experience and consciousness. Husserl, often regarded as the father of phenomenology, emphasized the importance of intentionality, the notion that consciousness is always about something, and introduced the method of *epoché* to suspend judgments about the external world and focus on pure experience (Husserl, 1931). Heidegger, a student of Husserl, diverged from his mentor's approach by delving into the concept of being (Dasein), arguing that understanding existence requires examining the fundamental way humans relate to the world (Heidegger, 1927). This tradition seeks to uncover the essential truths of human experience by setting aside preconceived notions and biases, focusing instead on the phenomena as they present themselves in consciousness.

The philosophical tradition of phenomenology, as established by Husserl and Heidegger, aligned with this qualitative phenomenological study as it emphasizes the understanding of human experiences from the first-person perspective, focusing on the essence of experiences as they are lived (see Heidegger, 1927; Husserl, 1931). In

qualitative research, phenomenological methods aim to deeply explore and describe the lived experiences of individuals, capturing their perceptions, feelings, and responses to their situations. In studying human rights violations against legal immigrants in Minnesota, this phenomenological approach involved collecting detailed narratives from the immigrants themselves. This approach aligns with Husserl's emphasis on the lifeworld (*Lebenswelt*) - the world as experienced in the immediacy of our lived experiences, prior to reflection or conceptualization (Husserl, 1936). It also resonates with Heidegger's focus on *Dasein* or being-in-the-world, and his exploration of how individuals make sense of their existence and experiences.

By using this approach, I gained insights into how legal immigrants perceive and are affected by human rights violations, understanding their experiences in a rich, contextualized manner. The findings from this study could provide valuable, nuanced information for policymakers, legal authorities, and support services aiming to address and mitigate these human rights issues.

In reviewing existing literature on this study area, I focused on six main areas: (a) the concept of vulnerability and the legal protection of immigrants, (b) an overview of the selected immigrant population in Minnesota, (c) perceived structural vulnerabilities of legal immigrants in Minnesota, (d) initiating and escalating factors of human rights violations against legal immigrants in Minnesota, (e) the nature of human rights violations on legal immigrants in Minnesota, (f) socioeconomic and cultural impacts of human rights violations against legal immigrants in Minnesota.

A Synopsis of Human Rights Violation on Legal Immigrants in Minnesota

For several decades now, there has been a record increase in immigration enforcement against noncitizen immigrants, including detainment and deportation by the US government (Patler & Golash-Boza, 2017). Despite established principles in the IBHR, many legal immigrants in Minnesota still experience human rights violations in Minnesota and across the United States (Tsuchiya et al., 2021). The Customs and Border Protection policy, and the unprecedented increase in federal immigration enforcement policies, detention, and deportation of immigrants without due process, have increased racial outlining, and denial of due process rights, for many legal immigrants in Minnesota (Schmidt, 2019). This adversely impacts their wellbeing and welfare by limiting their ability to provide for their families, raise bond fees, and obtain legal representation, hence poor health care and living conditions (Tsuchiya et al., 2021). Earlier research held that immigrants who undergo detention experience vulnerabilities that spread across various systems permeating different aspects of their lives and the lives of their families by extension (Patler & Golash-Boza, 2017).

Existing literature has suggested that phenotypically, European immigrants face far less discrimination than their counterparts from Asia, Latin America, and Africa (Portes & Rumbaut, 2016). In comparing the adaptation of African, Latin American, Asian, and European immigrants in the United States, Portes and Rumbaut (2016) opined that non-European immigrants are faced with greater obstacles than those from Europe. In another study, Danso and Lum (2013) maintained that in Minnesota, East African, Hispanic, and Asian immigrants experienced higher rates of hostilities by citizens than

immigrants from European countries. The above empirical findings lend support to this study's assumption that human rights violations affect legal immigrants in Minnesota in one way or the other, and at varying levels with Hispanics, Africans, and Asians being more vulnerable and facing the brunt. The above findings also support the theoretical framework guiding this study.

The Legal Protection of Immigrants and Their Vulnerabilities in Host Countries

Although human rights are inalienable and should not be granted on the basis of citizenship, the authority to protect national borders and determine domestic laws lies extensively in the hands of the state. The principles of the IBHR underscore that the protection of fundamental human rights and freedoms should not be dependent on one's geographical location in the world (Easley et al., 2001). Every state is responsible for upholding and protecting human rights through its domestic laws and enforcement (Timmer et al., 2021). Unlike other issues of a cross-cutting nature, such as environmental protection, the international system has not mandated any organization or institution to provide overall normative oversight and leadership in the protection of migrants' rights (Kysel, 2016). Normatively, the rights of all migrants only receive comprehensive elaboration and protection indirectly by applying general human rights treaties which recognize that all human beings have equal rights. This is what Fineman referred to as formal equality approach, which she considered deficient for failing to address gross and growing socioeconomic and material disparities (as cited in Baumgärtel, 2020).

States have the autonomy to admit non-nationals into their territory, as well as the autonomy to detain or expulse non-nationals from their borders. However, despite this

autonomy to manage migration flows states are obligated by international law to do so in such a way that upholds the rights of individuals within their territory and under their jurisdiction (Kysel, 2016). Existing international law does not impose upon states how to govern their migration flows, nor does it dictate how to formulate migration policies. In fact, the existing international legal framework creates a sustainable basis for having long-term migration governance with respect for the individual, as well as recognizing the states' competence to govern access and the stay of non-nationals.

While expanding the rights of domestic workers in international law, including through the adoption of the International Labor Organization (ILO) Domestic Workers Convention in 2011, migrant workers continue to remain vulnerable to employment-related abuse, discrimination, and exploitation (Murphy, 2013). Legal and political restrictions on the status and rights of migrants limit their freedom of movement, reducing their individual social capital and resources at all stages of migration, particularly in countries of destination. According to Hagar et al. (2022), most migrant workers in the UAE, Qatar, and other Middle East countries are often charged fees to apply for, get hired, and travel to jobs, before their departure. In most cases, these migrant workers or their family members borrow the money and become indebted in the process. This traps them into being unable to refuse a job before their departure, ask for higher pay, demand their rights, and to continue working even if there is abuse or contract violation when they reach the destination country (Paoletti et al., 2014). This has led many migrants into a vicious circle of indebtedness before they start to earn money for themselves and their families.

In Europe and the United States, most migrants typically face linguistic and institutional barriers to access jobs for which they qualify. This makes them generally more likely to have shorter job tenure, non-standard or informal contracts, and low-skilled occupations than their counterparts who are citizens of the United States (Wilson & Stimpson, 2020). All these factors make their employment status sensitive to business cycle fluctuations, which increases their vulnerability during economic downturns (Sarrett, 2021). With a high concentration of migrants in low-pay jobs than natives and having to transfer a large portion of their income abroad through remittance, most migrants typically have limited savings in host countries and are therefore poorly equipped to afford an average living standard (Hagar et al., 2022). Further, the residence status of migrants typically determines their entitlement to welfare state provisions and public health care. This significantly limits their access to social amenities compared to their native counterparts.

Immigrants in the United States face substantial economic and legal barriers to accessing healthcare and other social amenities. Most recent authorized immigrants are ineligible for federally funded public insurance programs and other state-funded programs, even for children of immigrants; for instance, most states do not provide any Medicaid benefits to pregnant immigrants and recently immigrated legal permanent resident (LPR) children (Wilson & Stimpson, 2020). In some cases, immigration policies such as the public charge rule may further disincentivize even authorized immigrants to seek care when they need one (Tsuchiya et al., 2021).

The United States has not offered large-scale, congressionally supported amnesty to most immigrants since the 1990s. Since the 2016 presidential election, most United States

policies toward immigrants have been hostile (Wasem, 2020). The Trump Administration suggested an end to birthright citizenship, characterized Mexican and Somali immigrants as criminals, and attempted to rescind Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) protections, which offers transitory protections to undocumented immigrants brought to the country as minors (Mapp et al., 2019). These actions and statements have generated considerable anxiety in immigrant communities across the United States and Minnesota where the three major immigrant populations presented in this study.

The Selected Immigrant Populations Under Study in Minnesota

Previous studies have shown that nearly 10% of Minnesota residents are immigrants, with 7% being native-born United States citizens with an origin from at least one immigrant parent (Flood et al., 2020). In 2018, 484,192 immigrants comprised 9% of Minnesota population (Tsuchiya et al., 2021). According to Flood et al. (2020), the top countries of origin for immigrants in Minnesota are Mexico (12%), Somalia (8%), India (6%), Laos - Hmong (5%), and Ethiopia (5%). This study focused on three main immigrant populations in Minnesota: Mexicans, Somalis, and Hmong.

Mexican Immigrants

The history of Mexicans and Mexican Americans in Minnesota is a history of a working class. Like every immigrant group, Latinos came to Minnesota in search of opportunities to better their lives. Being one of the first immigrant population to arrive in Minnesota, the historical heart of the Mexican immigrant community is the West Side of St. Paul, but they have their roots in the sugar beet fields of greater Minnesota, where migrants from Mexico labored as early as the 1910s (Roethke, 2007). Mexicans found

themselves engaged in work both in the urban and the rural communities. Many families settled in the cities of Minneapolis and St Paul, while others were recruited to work in agriculture as migrant workers in the fields of outstate Minnesota (Roethke, 2007).

Mexican migrant families often moved from community to community following the fieldwork, as they worked under a contract between the farmer and the migrant family. Roethke (2007) stated that as Mexicans were recruited to work in the sugar beet fields, food processing, and meat packing industry, communities grew with Mexican residents in the metro and rural areas from the Twin Cities to Glencoe, Owatonna, Willmar, Worthington, and the Red River Valley. Reports from MNopedia (2016) connotes that

Since the early 1900s, Latinos have been a productive and essential part of Minnesota. Most of the earliest arrivals to Minnesota were migrant farm workers from Mexico or Texas; they faced obstacles to achieving citizenship; this continues to be an obstacle and is an issue still under discussion today. (p. 1)

Bourgois et al. (2017) noted that most Mexicans acquire legal permanent resident status in the United States through family reunification, either as immediate relatives of United States citizens or through other family-sponsored networks. Mexican immigrants in Minnesota have also been beneficiaries of the DACA program, which provides temporary deportation relief and work authorization to unauthorized migrants who arrived as children and meet the program's education and other eligibility criteria. Tsuchiya et al. (2021) noted that Mexicans and other immigrant populations in Minnesota experience several challenges and risks stemming from upstream social-structural factors

which constrain and limit their options for security and integration in the United States. These inequities are a byproduct of the hierarchical social structures and power relations enforced through policies, practices, and laws concerning an individual's legal status and other attributes (Bourgois et al., 2017).

Somali Immigrants

Following reports by the United Nations of over 1.5 million Somalis internally displaced and over 1 million fleeing Somalia as refugees and asylees due to instability, the United States began issuing visas to Somali refugees in 1992 (Darboe, 2003). For Somalis who received a visa, the decision to leave families and homes in East Africa was painful, but many did leave and resettled in the United States (Chambers, 2017). Somalis started arriving in Minnesota in 1992 as refugees while others arrived as immigrants through the sponsorship of family members or relocated to Minnesota from other parts of the United States (Chambers, 2017). The resettlement of Somali refugees in Minnesota was largely facilitated by refugee resettlement agencies like the International Institute of Minnesota, World Relief Minnesota (today know as Arrive Ministry), nonprofit faith-based service organizations like Lutheran Social Services and Catholic Charities, Somali-led organizations like Somali Family Services and the Confederation of Somali Community in Minnesota, and Somali individuals and families (Darboe, 2003).

In 2018, Minnesota was home to one of the largest Somali communities in the Somali diaspora. Census data from 2015 offered an estimate of 57,000 while other data estimates the number ranging from 81,000 to 100,000 (Tsuchiya et al., 2021). The majority of Somalis in Minnesota live in the Twin Cities metropolitan area, while others

have settled in smaller towns throughout the state. Many Somalis have chosen Minnesota because of their social networks, for educational and employment opportunities, and to access an array of services (Chambers, 2017). Like many immigrants, language and cultural barriers have been a major challenge for Somalis seeking to integrate into Minnesota. Many arrived with proficiency in multiple languages: Somali, Arabic, and sometimes Swahili, French, or Italian. Gaining English proficiency has been challenging making their transition to America difficult (Chambers, 2017). Upon arrival in the 1990s, most Minnesotans were unfamiliar with the Muslim religious practices and beliefs, hence posing a barrier to practice their faith in Minnesota. For many Somalis, finding space for daily prayers and ablution—the ritual of cleansing one’s hands and feet before daily prayers—while at school or at work is a recurring challenge. Despite significant strategies to accommodate these practices in Minnesota, the issues surrounding religious practices from the immigrants’ countries of origin remain difficult in a society that is not used to accommodating prayer in schools or workplaces. For many Somali women who choose to wear the hijab, religious discrimination at school, at work, and in public places is prevalent, while other Somali women have decided not to wear the hijab at all (Chambers, 2017).

The events of September 11, 2001, impacted people around the world, including Somalis in Minnesota. Fear of terrorism led the U.S. government to scrutinize anything that it believed had connections to the terrorist network Al-Qaeda (Darboe, 2003). This left Somalis very vulnerable to discrimination and hostilities in Minnesota. Men from Arab and Muslim countries were required to register with the federal government and

agree to be interviewed annually by the government through a new federal program, the National Security Entry-Exit Registration System (NSEERS; Ali, 2011). Since then, the U.S. government has continued investigations on possible links that Somalis living in Minnesota may have with Al-Shabaab and Islamic State (ISIS). From 2007 to 2008, approximately 20 young Somali men left Minnesota and returned to Somalia and recruited to join Al-Shabaab (Ali, 2011). Nine Somali American men pleaded guilty in 2016 and were convicted of collusion to fight for the terrorist group ISIS in Syria. The uniqueness of the trial in the United States left the Somali community deeply troubled by the radicalization of Somali youth in Minnesota (Tsuchiya et al. 2021).

Prior to his election in November 2016 President Donald Trump used anti-immigrant rhetoric and scapegoating as some of his most dangerous weapons on his campaign trail. This anti-immigrant rhetoric and scapegoating resonated with many Minnesotans, entrenching even deeper anti-immigrant tendencies after President Trump's speech on August 5th, 2016. In his speech, he called out on Somali refugees in Minnesota of being "a pool of potential recruiting targets for Islamic terror groups," criticizing them for being allegedly reliant on public assistance due to high unemployment rates (Koumpilova, 2016).

The experience of Somali immigrants in Minnesota provides one important example of the multifaceted interplay between immigration, experiences of discrimination, acculturation, neighborhood characteristics, and well-being in the United States. Being Black Muslim immigrants, Somalis are faced with a triple challenge of race, religion, and immigration status in the United States (Ellis et al., 2010). By

identifying with these three marginalized identities, Somalis are vulnerable to discrimination related to all three intersecting identities. Dion (2001) opined that in the early 2000s, Somali Americans reported higher levels of perceived housing discrimination compared to other immigrants in the United States. Somali Americans have also been noted for recording the highest rates of unemployment and lowest rates of college graduation among East African immigrants (Diamant, 2017). The kind of reception experienced by Somalis in Minnesota and other parts of North America is complicated by societal hostility toward Muslims. Since after 9/11 and the ushering in of the Trump administration, experiences of exclusion and prejudice have become characteristic of the Somali immigrant experience in Minnesota, and within the United States, anti-Muslim hate crimes have been on a steady increase since 2016 (Kishi, 2017). All these challenges faced by Somalis in Minnesota and elsewhere in the United States have adversely impacted their integration in the United States, leaving them very vulnerable to discrimination and hostilities.

Hmong Immigrants

At the Geneva Conference in July 1962, Laos expressed its intent of remaining neutral throughout the Cold War. While the United States and the Soviet Union agreed to honor the neutrality of Laos, this agreement only lasted until the United States decided to fight a clandestine war targeting Communist Vietnamese residing in northern Laos and the Ho Chi Minh Trail of Laos. The Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) recruited many Hmong people to secretly carry out high-risk attacks in both locations in Laos. The Hmong became allies to the United States military since the United States provided

humanitarian aid to Hmong communities during the 1960s and 70s. When the war ended with the Fall of Saigon in 1975 and as Communists took over Laos, many Hmong, especially those who fought on behalf of the United States, fled to Thailand. These Hmong population lived in Thailand until the Indochina Migration and Refugee Assistance Act (IMRAA) was extended to include Laotians, which comprised the ethnic groups of Laos, Hmong, that refugees began coming into the United States.

With the passing of IMRAA, mass movement of Hmong refugees began moving into the United States between the 1970s and the 1990s. These decades contributed to the total 130,000 Hmong who came to the United States as political refugees (Swartz et al., 2021). In the 1980s the United States government acknowledged the Hmong people's role in the Laotian war and shed light on it to the public (Swartz et al., 2021). When Bill Clinton signed the Hmong Veterans' Naturalization Act (HVNA) into law in 2000, many Hmong were able to gain citizenship in the United States. With the signing of the HVNA, St. Paul was home to a Hmong population of approximately 66,000 by 2010.

Minnesota has over 73,000 Hmong Americans living within the state borders, and 94% of them live in the Twin Cities area (Muramatsu et al., 2022). Large parts of St. Paul, like nearly all of University Avenue for example, is lined with Hmong owned markets, restaurants, shops, and services such as the Hmong Cultural Center, Hmong American Partners, and law offices with Hmong American attorneys. Additionally, the local university, Concordia University, has a Center for Hmong Studies. Hmong also have a stronghold in Minnesota economy especially in the agricultural sector. Politically, the Hmong people have held electoral positions and served at the state level in

Minnesota. The strong presence in the community is a special phenomenon for Hmong Americans living in Minnesota compared to Hmong Americans living elsewhere (Swartz et al., 2021).

Muramatsu et al. (2022) opined that the Model Minority Myth, that all Asians are educated, successful, and prosperous, disguises the varied characteristics that exist within the different nationalities of Asians, and has been used by the dominant White racial group to divide Asians from African American, LatinX, and American Indian racial/ethnic groups. This assertion is true for Hmong populations in Minnesota, where policies and prioritization criteria ignore vulnerable Asian subgroups connoting that Asians do not require resources and attention in public health programs, academic literature, or workforce development (Jones, 2000). These biased perceptions, beliefs and values, and unjust distribution of resources in public health, educational support, and employment has led to personally mediated racism such as microaggressions experienced by Hmong with specific health, educational and employment needs. Institutionalized racism and personally mediated racism has led to internalized racism where a large number of Hmong believe their health needs are unworthy of attention, which has made most Hmong in Minnesota so oblivious to recognizing racism against the Hmong population (Muramatsu et al., 2022).

Perceived Structural Vulnerabilities of Legal Immigrants in Minnesota

According to Willen et al. (2017), vulnerability is a multidimensional construct that can be experienced in many different forms. The concept of structural vulnerability has its roots in medical anthropology, recognizing and highlighting how upstream macro

social structures contribute to suffering, distress, and health (Holmes, 2011).

Contemporary social structures have placed many migrants outside legal protection categories today, necessitating the need for specific human rights protection interventions to address their vulnerabilities both in transit and at their destination. The vulnerable situations faced by migrants emanate from a range of situational and personal factors that may intersect or coexist simultaneously, influencing and exacerbating each other over time (Bourgois et al., 2017). Migrants are not inherently vulnerable, nor do they lack resilience. The vulnerability of migrants to human rights violations is caused by various forms of discrimination, inequality, and structural and societal dynamics that lead to diminished and unequal entitlement to human rights (Szaflarski et al., 2019; Patler, 2017). Also, migrants may find themselves vulnerable based on the situations that compel them to leave their country of origin, their travel circumstances, the conditions they face in their destination, and personal characteristics such as their gender identity, their age, race, or health status (Tsuchiya et al., 2021).

The perpetration of racial disparities in healthcare, employment, socioeconomic access, and the unprecedented increase in immigration enforcement against legal immigrants, including detainment and deportation by the U.S. government, exposes them to multiple levels of vulnerabilities that affect different aspects of their lives (Patler, 2017). According to Tsuchiya et al. (2021), legal immigrants in Minnesota are susceptible to challenges and risks orchestrated by social-structural factors that limit their security options and make their integration in the United States more difficult.

Discrimination

Over the past few decades, large numbers of immigrants have entered the United States seeking refuge, economic opportunity, and family reunification. This has led to unprecedented levels of ethnic, racial, and cultural diversity in the United States (Karger & Stoesz, 2014). While immigrants from every corner of the globe come into the United States for different reasons, the immigration experience is not uniform for every immigrant. Discrimination is considered a key stressor for minority populations in Minnesota, which contributes to persistent disparities across other important aspects in their daily life (Berkel et al., 2010). Immigrants are often known as the invisible minority (IM) group in the United States. Although, for the most part, legal immigrants fulfill their civic obligations like every other citizen, they remain victims of discrimination in Minnesota. Further, research has indicated that many immigrants in Minnesota who are eligible to work in the United States often encounter some level of discrimination in their workplaces, which prevents them from economic advancement and job advancement opportunities. (Akomolafe, 2013).

According to Bonikowski et al. (2005), White noncollege job seekers have better advantages over their African American, Asian, and Latino counterparts in the job market. This indicates that Whites are systematically preferred to minorities. As a result, minorities with identical skills as white applicants are denied job opportunities. Also, most White employers in Minnesota tend to see more potential qualifications of White applicants and more commonly view White applicants as a better fit for more desirable jobs (Pager et al., 2009). Most legal immigrants in Minnesota are often disadvantaged in

gaining access to jobs for which they are educationally qualified and earn less than their White counterparts because they are more likely to be subject to work discrimination (De Jong & Madamba, 2002). Racial discrimination remains a persistent source of labor market disadvantages for racial and ethnic minorities in Minnesota. As this status quo persists, Mexicans, Somalis, and Hmong immigrants in Minnesota do not have equal opportunities to advance their career to supervisory positions or any other higher position since employers are influenced by negative stereotypes, which limits their levels of perceived job security (Hirsh & Lyons, 2010).

Following the events of September 11, 2001, Somalis and Muslims in Minnesota and other states have been discriminated against, targeted by hate groups, and surveilled by the FBI because of their Islamic faith. The executive orders signed by President Donald Trump in February of 2017 even banned new immigrants from Somalia, among other countries (Berkel et al., 2010). With President Trump's ascension to power, the political climate of the United States became very unfavorable to immigrants. Prior to his election in November 2016, Trump used anti-immigration rhetoric and scapegoating as his weapons on the campaign trail. He labeled Somali refugees in Minnesota as a pool of potential recruits for Islamic terror groups, and immigrants from Mexico as the main source of crime in the United States (Koumpilova, 2016). This sparked off anti-immigrant tendencies and hostilities from Minnesotans.

Financial Insecurity

Documented Latino immigrants in the labor markets have fewer opportunities for improving wages or their working conditions compared to their Caucasians counterparts,

especially in the context of a deeper recession. Documented individuals who have legal rights to work continue to encounter injustices, which prevents them from advancing to a better economic situation (Gentsch & Massey, 2011). African American, Hispanic and women with lower ascriptive status increases the risk of experiencing racial employment discrimination (Hursh & Lyons, 2010). In addition, employers capitalize on migrant workers' vulnerabilities to maintain cheap and reliable laborers. Clark et al. (2020) opined that most legal immigrant primarily work in a labor force division that does not provide living wages, benefits, or job security. Financial difficulties expose immigrant families to risks of poor health and relationship violence (van Gelder et al., 2020; Yoshikawa et al., 2020). Jobs typically held by legal immigrants in Minnesota do not have the flexibility of working from home. Prepandemic data showed that only 16.2% of Hispanic workers' jobs allowed them to work remotely compared to 31.4% of non-Hispanic workers (Gil et al., 2020; United States Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2018b).

Access to Healthcare

The growing trend of migration has been mirrored by a demand for a reorientation of health policies to better protect migrants' health in host countries (Clark et al., 2020). Numerous federal policies enacted over the past 2 decades have had a significant impact on immigrants' access to health care, and the 2010 Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (ACA) is no exception. Prior to 1996, legal immigrants and their children were eligible for health coverage under the Medicaid program if they met state-specific income- and asset eligibility criteria (Pandey et al., 2014). With the signing of the *Illegal Immigration and Immigrant Responsibility Act and the Personal Responsibility and Work*

Opportunity Reconciliation Act (PRWORA) in 1996 by President Clinton, the United States welfare system was restricted, with a significant impact on legal immigrants' access to healthcare and other federally funded programs. Under this legislation, legal immigrants lost eligibility for all means-tested federally funded programs for their first five years in the United States, including Medicaid (Pandey et al., 2014). After 1996, few states opted to proactively enact their own legislation to cover legal immigrants subject to the five-year ban. In 2002, the *State Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP) Urban Child Amendment* provided states with the option of federal matching funds to cover care for pregnant women despite their immigration status. While this legislation seemed lenient to pregnant immigrant women, it only justified care for the unborn child whose immigration status remained unknown (Wilson & Stimpson, 2020).

In 2009 the *Immigrant Children's Health Improvement Act* was passed, which gave states the option to cover "legal" immigrant pregnant women and children who were subject to the 5-year ban and to receive federal financial matching payments to assist with the cost of coverage (Yasenov et al, 2020). As of 2016, 31 states, including Minnesota, had extended coverage to lawful permanent resident immigrant children and 32 states to pregnant immigrant women who were lawful permanent residents within the 5 years of residency. Under the ACA, legal immigrants are, in most circumstances, still subject to the 5-year ban, which limits their ability to access affordable healthcare (Wilson & Stimpson, 2020). Since 1996, significant restrictions on access to public health benefits have been placed on undocumented and legal immigrants alike. The 5-year ban on access to public health insurance coverage for all immigrants results in a significant barrier to

access to needed care for legal immigrants in Minnesota (Bromley et al., 2012). The ACA has not adequately addressed the healthcare needs of legal immigrants under health reform.

Persistent disparities in access to healthcare between immigrants and United States citizens are well documented. In 2016, it was reported that lawful immigrants experienced more barriers when attempting to seek health care than United States citizens, despite access to care being recognized as a policy concern (Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality, 2017). In Minnesota, disparities in access to healthcare services such as preventive care contribute to numerous health disadvantages among immigrants (Ellis et al., 2022). The widely recognized social disadvantages many immigrants in Minnesota face are associated with observed racial/ethnic disparities in primary care access. These disadvantages include language barriers, limited educational attainment, inadequate insurance coverage, financial difficulties, citizenship, and immigration status (Tsuchiya et al., 2021).

For Mexicans, Somalis, and Hmong immigrants in Minnesota, a significant barrier to healthcare access is proficiency in English. Limited English proficiency (LEP) compromises legal immigrants' access to healthcare by limiting the quality of interactions between patients and healthcare providers (Tsuchiya et al., 2021). Research has shown that compared to English-speaking immigrants, non-English-speaking immigrants in Minnesota are 3.58 times more likely to be uninsured, 1.40 times less likely to visit a primary care provider due to cost, 3.26 times more likely to not have a primary care provider, and 1.27 times less likely to have a yearly checkup (DuBard &

Gizlice, 2008). In 2010, the United States Census Bureau indicated that across the United States and within Minnesota, lawful immigrants are four times more likely to be uninsured than their citizen counterparts (United States Census Bureau, 2010).

English Language Proficiency

In the last 3 decades, there has been an increase in immigration to the United States from non-English-speaking countries. This has drawn attention to the significance of English proficiency in the integration of immigrants in the United States. According to Bleakley and Chin (2010), English proficiency helps immigrants integrate economically into their new home by narrowing the wage gap between immigrants and United States citizens. Limited English language proficiency is a major barrier to effective integration to American society. It impedes access to health care services, schools, and government agencies; relegates workers to low-wage jobs with reduced likelihood of upward mobility; and leads to early school dropout and associated risk behaviors on the part of young people. It is also a key factor in what has been called acculturative stress, as children and their families negotiate a new system in which their native languages may not be understood, and in which they may not know the language of the host country (Hernandez & Charney, 1998).

In the early 2000s, California was first while Minnesota ranked second nationwide, in the percentage of refugees living in the state. As of 2020, the second largest Hmong community and the largest Somali community in the United States reside in Minnesota. The number of African immigrants in the state grew by 620% in the 1990s, and the number of immigrants from Latin America grew by 577%. From 2000-2010,

Latinx accounted for 60.7% of the population growth in the Midwest and 27.8% of growth in Minnesota (Hernandez & Charney, 1998). Apart from hosting these three large communities of immigrants, Minnesota hosts particularly robust economic sectors that have historically depended upon immigrant labor, such as agriculture, meatpacking, and healthcare, some of which were deemed “essential” during the COVID-19 pandemic. Coming from non-English-speaking countries, Minnesota’s immigrants and refugees represent a remarkable diversity, with more than 230 languages spoken in their homes. The top languages spoken at home by immigrants are Spanish, Somali, other East African languages, and Hmong.

Over 28% of Minnesota immigrant population have limited English language proficiency. Proficiency in English has critical implications for Mexican, Somali, and Hmong families in Minnesota to have equitable access to education, housing, healthcare, better employment opportunities, social services, as well as to improve their well-being and integration in the state. Numerous studies have examined the influences of limited English language proficiency on access to health care and identified that patients with LEP often have trouble communicating with medical providers and rate their health care experiences more negatively (Web et al., 2020). They also experience worse access to care, including obtaining health insurance, medical care, physician visits, and preventive services. This in part, explains why during the COVID-19 pandemic, healthcare disparities increased among immigrant populations in Minnesota (Barwise et al., 2021).

According to Lang (2022), proficiency in the host country’s language is very crucial for the successful labor market integration of immigrants. While economic

opportunity differs from economic mobility, more economic opportunity will likely lead to an increase in social and economic intergenerational mobility (Timothy, 2016). In Minnesota, English language proficiency is a barrier that directly inhibits increases in opportunity and intergenerational mobility for Mexicans, Somalis, and Hmong who are already fraught with multiple disadvantages (Tsuchiya et al., 2021). Proficiency in English is necessary to obtain information about jobs and to be able to apply for a job. Most jobs—especially skilled jobs—in Minnesota require English language skills to communicate with supervisors, peers, customers, and business partners. Immigrants who proficient in English are more likely to find a job and more productive on the job (Lang, 2022). Research has shown that there is a positive impact in the effects of language proficiency on earnings (Bleakley & Chin 2004; Chiswick & Miller 1995; Miranda & Zhu 2013). The lack of proficiency in English puts Mexicans, Somalis, and Hmong immigrant populations in Minnesota at a disadvantaged position in terms of their ability to earn decent pay to cater for their wellbeing and their families.

Housing Affordability

Finding a haven from their countries of origin has been a driving force for millions of immigrants who arrive in the United States. Like any other immigrant population, Mexicans, Somalis, and Hmong immigrants come into the United States seeking the opportunity to build a better life for themselves and their children. Finding a stable, affordable home is inextricably tied to these dreams. However, for many immigrants living in Minnesota, securing a safe, healthy, and affordable home is almost impossible due to systemic barriers that have created disparities in home ownership

(Tsuchiya et al., 2021). After many years since their arrival in Minnesota, many immigrants face significant and urgent challenges finding and maintaining adequate and affordable housing. A growing number of legal immigrants pay more than they can afford for housing, forcing them to live in substandard conditions or sacrifice other necessities like food, medicine, or transportation. These challenges disproportionately impact immigrants in Minnesota, especially Hmong, Somalis, Mexicans who are already affected by multiple barriers to earn a decent income. Almost 40% of immigrant households in the Twin Cities metropolitan area pay more than 30% of their income on housing (Barwise et al., 2021).

According to Xiong et al. (n.d), between 2000 and 2015, the Hmong foreign-born population in the Twin Cities region grew by only 25%. However, compared to other immigrant groups, foreign-born Hmong households in Minnesota have higher incomes and homeownership rates, with a median yearly household income of \$50,000 and 46 percent of foreign-born Hmong-led households owning their home. Despite a significant percentage in home ownership, the Hmong immigrant population still trail behind their White counterparts who boast of over 76% of homeownership (Xiong et al., n.d). While the Mexican foreign-born population increased by 56% in the Twin Cities region, accounting for 30% of the growth in the immigrant population between 2000 and 2015, their median yearly household income is only about \$36,000 and a homeownership rate of 39% (MartinRogers et al., 2016). Despite an increase in population of over 160% between 2000 and 2015, Somali immigrants have extremely low yearly household incomes of about \$20,000 and only about 10% home ownership (Xiong, et al., n.d). Apart

from the income disadvantage due to factors such as language proficiency, Somali, Hmong, and Mexican immigrants also experience issues of discriminatory practices from landlords, high unaffordable rents, substandard living conditions, and long waiting lists for subsidized housing, which affect their ability to afford a decent lifestyle in Minnesota (Tsuchiya et al., 2021).

Immigration Detention

According to Cartwright (2011), the U.S. immigration system creates vulnerabilities for immigrants via challenges, delays, and denials. This observation is also supported Tsuchiya et al. (2021) for immigrants undergoing detention in Minnesota. Some of the challenges these detained immigrants face include securing representation, navigating immigration court proceedings, obtaining necessary information for their case while in detention, and lengthy administrative processing times (Tsuchiya et al., 2021).

In Minnesota, Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) contracts with local county jails such as Sherburne County Jail, Freeborn Adult Detention Center, Kandiyohi County Jail, and Carver County Jail to house immigration detainees. Since these are federal contracts, these jails are limited in their ability to enforce local Minnesota standards for detainee health, sanitation, or isolation, which is problematic when considering ICE's record of medical neglect and abuse (McGuire, n.d.). These facilities are not equipped to treat persons with serious health needs, especially those needing long-term treatment. Persons with serious mental health issues have, in some cases, been placed in segregation or isolation because the staff lack appropriate means to manage a

mental health crisis. This means inmates spend 22 to 23 hours each day in their cell where they are not permitted access to books or any type of activity (McGuire, n.d.). In 2020 and early 2021, while the COVID-19 pandemic created opportunities for early release from state and federal prisons, this provided little relief to immigrants in detention as judges in Minnesota cited flight risks and lack of permanent address for immigrants in detention (Tsuchiya et al., 2021). Although civil offenders, such as immigrants, should legally be treated with fewer restrictions compared to criminal offenders, immigrant detainees are frequently sent to solitary confinement, which is one of the most restrictive policies. While in solitary confinement, these immigrant detainees have limited access to educational opportunities, visiting hours and technology to research their case. Technology access is particularly crucial as detainees in the federal immigration system are not entitled to legal representation (McGuire, n.d.). Most of the legal immigrants undergoing immigration detention in Minnesota experience multiple, intersecting vulnerabilities which also impact their families, especially since many detainees are supporting family members including children, pregnant spouses, or partners, and those with chronic health conditions (Tsuchiya et al., 2021).

Initiating and Escalating Factors of Human Rights Violations on Legal Immigrants in Minnesota

Estimates in 2021 suggested that 23% of United States citizens consider immigration as the most important problem facing the country, while 35% feel that immigration to the United States should be decreased (Abascal et al., 2021).

Approximately 34% of United States citizens think immigrants are a burden on the

country, a view that is also prevalent in other destination countries. These views of immigration and immigrants are racialized, in the United States with stereotypes of Latinos, Mexicans, Asians, and Africans, conforming to negative stereotypes of immigrants in general. Heightened anti-immigrant sentiments are politically consequential and have recently been linked to the voting for Donald Trump as president of the United States (Abascal et al., 2021). During President Trump's administration, there were several anti-immigration policy enactments that were deemed inconsistent with the rule of law, and that promoted human rights violations on immigrants in the United States. Though it predates Trump's administration, the opposition to migrant resettlement among some Minnesotans was invigorated by Trump's anti-immigration rhetoric and scapegoating, which was used as a dangerous weapon during his campaigns in November 2016 (Rawlins, 2017). Trump labeled Somali refugees in Minnesota as a recruiting target for Islamist terror groups, and blamed Mexican immigrants for all forms of crime in the United States. As COVID-19 burgeoned across the United States, Asian Americans experienced a surge in racially motivated hate crimes involving physical violence and harassment. This spiked disdain for Mexicans, Somalis, and Hmong immigrants in Minnesota, setting a solid base for human rights violations on legal immigrants in the state (Gover, 2020).

President Trump's Administrative Inconsistencies With the Rule of Law

One of the basic evaluative criteria of a constitutional democracy such as the United States is the rule of law. At a bare minimum, the rule of law requires that the use of the executive power remains consistent with preexisting law, including the

Constitution (Strauss, 2019). Without satisfying this minimum criterion, a country cannot boast of being a democracy, because a democratic people is a corporate entity that can only express its will through the laws: if the executive deploys the state's force outside those legal constraints, the people lose their ability to control the state's monopoly over human rights violations. The Trump administration has been subject to condemnation from child health and human rights experts for the pursuit of several immigration policies and practices that promote human rights violation on immigrants across the United States (Wood, 2018). During the first 3 years, the Trump administration propagated three categories of policy actions on refugees and asylees, which framed the way legal immigrants were perceived and treated by some immigration enforcement officers in Minnesota. These categories included those that abandon longstanding U.S. legal principles and policies, most notably nonrefoulement and due process, those that block the entry of refugees and asylees, and those that criminalize foreign nationals who attempt to seek asylum in the United States (Wasem, 2020).

Separating Families

In April 2018, former Attorney General Jeff Sessions announced the *Zero Tolerance Policy*, which significantly increased criminal prosecution of immigrants entering the United States. As a result of increased adult prosecution, parents were sent to federal jails while their children went to the Office of Refugee Resettlement, which directly led to family separation (Frye, 2020). Neither institution communicated with the other, and the United States government lost track of parents and children.

At the end of May 2018, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services reported 10,773 unaccompanied immigrant children in its custody, including the 20% swell in numbers since April 2018 due to enforced separation of children from parents at the U.S.-Mexico border (Wood, 2018). Many of these separated families were seeking asylum in the United States, and their children were held in inhuman conditions such as in makeshift shelters, warehouses, and abandoned shopping centers (Frye, 2020). They were grouped in cages and slept on the floor without appropriate access to sanitary facilities and medical care, and the documentation of their physical and mental health was poor (Goetze, 2022). The Zero Tolerance Policy was implemented with cruelty by refusing families protection and care who by U.S. law and international conventions on human rights, on refugees, and on the prevention of genocide and protection of children specifically deserved such care.

Gutting Asylum Laws

The United States law hallows the protections of the 1951 Refugee Convention, drafted during the horrors of the Second World War, and the 1967 Refugee Protocol, which created the framework for Asylum regulations at the global level. Central to this framework is the principle of nonrefoulement, which prevents countries from returning asylum seekers to places where they may face persecution (Schmidt, 2019). The United States ratified these treaties, incorporating the core principle of nonrefoulement into domestic laws, which provides that any person physically present in the United States or who arrives in the United States may apply for asylum irrespective of their status.

In the last 6 years, most immigrants and especially asylum seekers have faced a new odyssey of navigating intricate United States immigration laws and a restrictive environment that bars them from winning the promised protection (Rubio-Hernandez & Ayon, 2016). Immigration played a key role in the contentious United States national election in 2016 and the winner, President Trump championed far more negative and hostile views of immigration contrary to what the United States had witnessed in the last decades (Koumpilova, 2016). The Trump administration worked towards abhorrent conditions to deter asylum seekers from gaining protection in the United States. Trump's anti-immigrant tendencies subjected asylum seekers to punitive policies and executive orders that left asylees stranded, isolated, and vulnerable to various forms of human rights violations. The Trump administration challenged both the U.S. tradition as a safe place for immigrants and its traditional role in the international community as a beacon of freedom, liberty, and justice (Schmidt, 2019).

The U.S. immigration process affects not just immigrants living in Texas, Arizona, California, New York, Florida, and states along the US–Mexico border. It also affects immigrants in states like Minnesota with rich histories that continue to be shaped by immigrants. The Trump narrative plays on the perception that United States asylum and refugee policy lacks effective national security and public safety components (Rubio-Hernandez & Ayon, 2016). Without consideration of the biometric background checks and extensive national security screenings conducted on all potential refugees and asylees, Trump asserted that terrorists are coming to the United States as asylees and refugees. He labeled youth arriving from Central America as gang members who murder

United States citizens, despite research that shows most Central American youth are fleeing gang violence when they seek asylum in the United States (Koumpilova, 2016).

Trump weaponized refugees and asylees as if the United States is at war with humanitarian migrants (Wasem, 2020). Trump issued an executive order on January 25, 2017, to secure the southern border of the United States through the immediate construction of a physical wall on the southern border. The Trump administration abandoned refugee admissions, blocking Syrian nationals from refugee resettlement, and expanded expedited removal and detention of immigrants in the United States. The administration's efforts to criminalize asylum seekers and refugees reached a crescendo in 2018 with the zero-tolerance policy, which saw many immigrants prosecuted for minor immigration offenses in Minnesota, such as snow blocking the number plate of their car or for being loud in a hotel (Tsuchiya et al., 2021).

Terminating DACA

In 2012 President Barack Obama announced the establishment of the DACA program, which granted a subset of undocumented youth temporary relief from deportation, access to work authorization, and other benefits that were renewable every 2 years (Wasem, 2020). As of September 2018, over 908,000 (approximately 70%) of the 1.3 million young adults eligible for DACA had participated in the program. Several studies have examined DACA's short-term impacts and found overwhelmingly positive effects in the 2 to 3 years following its announcement. These studies have linked DACA to improved high school graduation rates and employment outcomes, decreased rates of

poverty, lower teen birth rates, improvements to mental health, and stronger feelings of inclusion and belonging (Patler et al., 2019).

During the presidential campaign in summer 2015, then-candidate Donald Trump stated that he would end DACA if elected. After his election as President of the United States, President Trump announced plans to terminate DACA in September 2017. With the Trump administration's efforts to terminate DACA, the futures of nearly 1 million program participants remained uncertain (Patler et al., 2019). In one study, a DACA recipient recounted,

I tend to worry a lot now. I don't know what's going to happen next. It does affect my emotional state to be constantly worried. My work authorization expires in October of next year, and I know that I can work until October, but I don't know what is going to happen after that. (as cited in Alulema, 2019, p. 128)

The announcement by the Trump administration to terminate DACA was challenged by several lawsuits leading to a nationwide preliminary injunction to freeze efforts to terminate the program. While this injunction kept the program and its recipient hopeful, there were uncertainties as to whether the Supreme Court would terminate or uphold DACA. On June 18, 2020, the Supreme Court ruled in favor of DACA, maintaining that the rescission of the program was arbitrary and capricious in violation of the Administrative Procedure Act (APA), and that it violated the United States Constitution's Equal Protection Clause (Rodriguez, 2021).

Attacks on Sanctuary Cities

In recognition of the efforts by the churches to offer safe haven to refugees from Central America, the Madison city council in Wisconsin passed Resolution 39,105 on June 7, 1983 and subsequently Resolution 41075 on March 5, 1985 (O'Brien et al., 2019). These resolutions officially declaring the entire Madison city a sanctuary for Central Americans fleeing violence in El Salvador and Guatemala. Since then, more than 100 cities nationwide including numerous cities in Minnesota have passed similar laws limiting the participation of local officials in the enforcement of federal immigration law, formally becoming "sanctuary cities" (O'Brien et al., 2019).

In Minnesota, several churches joined the Sanctuary movement, including St. Luke's Presbyterian of Wayzata, Minnesota, which declared itself a sanctuary in 1982 (Alulema, 2019). Since then, Churches in Minnesota have been a strong support to sanctuary congregations in other parts of the United States, most notably in Arizona, which faced infiltration by federal agents seeking to investigate and prosecute individuals within churches who had sheltered refugees within their congregations. Minneapolis and St. Paul, through their city councils, had each passed separation ordinances in 2003 and 2004 respectively. These ordinances fall into the broad category of "Don't Ask" ordinances, as opposed to "Don't Tell" ordinances, in that both ordinances placed limits on collecting immigration data during the conduct of municipal business (Patler et al., 2019). The November 2016 election of Donald Trump and the fact that the Republicans in Minnesota narrowly took full control of the state legislature, 94 potentially set the stage for further confrontations, as sanctuary cities had taken center stage in political

campaigns. In the wake of the presidential election, Minneapolis mayor Betsy Hodges joined a number of big-city mayors to make clear her commitment to separating local law enforcement from federal immigration enforcement.

With the killing of Kathryne Steinle in San Francisco in July 2015 by Juan Francisco Lopez-Sanchez, an undocumented immigrant who had been convicted of seven felonies and deported several times to Mexico (O'Brien et al., 2019), the San Francisco sanctuary policy was heavily attacked by Trump the then Republican presidential candidate, who had labeled Mexicans as drug dealers, rapists, and criminals (Wasem, 2020). Unlike the earlier movement, which focused more on political refugees, Minnesota's current effort has focused on keeping families together (Rodriguez, 2021). The November 2016 election of Donald Trump reinvigorated the Sanctuary Movement in Minnesota. On December 6, 2016, the non-profit group ISALAH held a public meeting at which thirteen Minnesota congregations declared themselves to be sanctuary churches, meaning that churches "would have individuals residing in their place of worship for an undetermined amount of time, while the community of Sanctuary works on the stay of removal orders for each person residing in the space or until those individuals can safely arrive to another place of sanctuary (Wiebe, 2017).

In terms of preventive action, the Minneapolis ordinance denies the use of city resources or personnel solely for the purpose of detecting or apprehending persons for immigration purposes but does not explicitly prohibit information sharing. Public safety officials may not undertake any law enforcement action for the sole purpose of detecting the presence of undocumented persons, or to verify immigration status. This language is

more ambiguous, but again does not explicitly limit information sharing or maintenance (Wiebe, 2017).

Trump's narrative on sanctuary cities garnered much attention, often outplaying the discourse of other politicians as well as law enforcement statements regarding the benefits of sanctuary cities. Within the first week of his inauguration, President Trump signed an executive order titled *Enhancing Public Safety in the Interior of the United States* (Rodriguez, 2021). The order stated that any jurisdiction that did not comply with federal immigration policy would be ineligible to receive federal grants and left the designation of a "sanctuary" jurisdiction to the discretion of the Secretary of Homeland Security (O'Brien et al., 2019, p. 5). This executive order was a follow-through of Trump's campaign promise to strip federal funds from sanctuary cities. Although efforts to roll back Sanctuary Cities in Minnesota have been faced with steep resistance, such efforts have kept anti-immigrant sentiments alive in some parts of the state (Wasem, 2020).

The Invocation of Title 42 – 1944 Public Health Services Act

Four months into the outbreak of COVID-19, the Trump administration directed the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) in March 2020 to issue an order overriding the national and international legal protections for asylum seekers at the U.S border. Under the pretext of the COVID-19 pandemic, the order halted the rights of many immigrants to a fair hearing and facilitated their expulsion from the United States (Beckett et al., 2022). The CDC order emanated from a public health law (Title 42, United States Code Section 265), enacted in 1944. Title 42 gave the United States

government the mandate to prohibit in whole or in part the introduction of persons and property from foreign countries where communicable diseases exist, for fear of introducing such disease(s) into the United States (Beckett, 2022). By invoking Title 42, the Trump administration and the CDC asserted that asylum seekers might increase the spread of COVID-19 in the United States if allowed to enter into the country.

Despite the lack of scientific evidence that expelling asylum seekers and other migrants is effective in curtailing the spread of COVID-19 at a time when the virus was at its peak in the United States, Title 42 was implemented mainly to target the entry of asylum seekers and other immigrants into the United States. By summarily expelling asylum seekers and other migrants from the United States, Title 42 violates the nonrefoulement obligations (not to send migrants back to unsafe places) of states, which is grounded the Convention against Torture and the 1951 Refugee Convention to which the United States is a party (Cheng, 2008; Easley et al., 2001; Patler et al., 2019). Title 42 also violates United States laws that allow migrants to seek asylum on arrival in the United States. Since the enactment of Title 42, over 1.6 million migrants entering the United States from Canada and Mexico have been summarily expelled with no opportunity to seek asylum in the United States (Beckett, 2022). During such expulsion, most migrants have reportedly faced verbal and physical abuse by government border officials, separated from their families, and detained in often inhumane conditions (Tsuchiya et al., 2021).

While criticizing the Trump administration for issuing the Title 42 order during his campaign, Biden and his administration continued to implement the order and even

made extensions to it in August 2021 and February 2022, citing concerns over the emergence of the Delta and Omicron variants respectively (Beckett, 2022). The continuous implementation of Title 42 has increased the mistreatment of legal immigrants in most parts of the United States, including Minnesota, leaving them vulnerable to discrimination, hate, bullying at schools, and access to healthcare.

Congressional Failure to Modify Long-standing Immigration Pathways to the United States

Built on a framework first established in 1952 and bolstered in 1965, Congress passed the 1986 Immigration Reform and Control Act (IRCA), which substantially increased resources for border enforcement, offered amnesty to migrants already residing in the United States, authorized a special legalization program for agricultural workers, and set employer sanctions against those who knowingly hire undocumented migrants for work (Hirschman, 2014). Since 1986, the United States legal immigration system had its last major updates in 1990. Three decades after the passage of the 1990 Immigration Act, the ways in which immigrants legally enter the United States is still defined by the same Act. Massey and Malone (2002) maintained that opportunities for legal entry and the human rights of immigrants have become more restricted today due to a lack of comprehensive immigration policy reform grounded in deep understanding about the drivers of migration. Policymakers have failed to modify the legal pathways available to immigrate to the United States (Massey & Malone, 2002). Although the United States has relied on immigrants to fill labor shortages, particularly in the agriculture and health industries, Congress has failed to create legal pathways for such immigrants to enter the

United States and the opportunity to remain in the country. While Congress used the Immigration and Nationality Act of 1965 to promote equality and to put an end to discrimination brought about by the quota system, it also established new forms of inequities through the per-country caps (Hirschman, 2014). The per-country cap, which was included in the law, made it possible for the United States to only allocate a certain number of visas to nationals from a given country each year. This extended the wait period for United States citizens and permanent residents to reunite with their families because of their place of birth (Gentsch & Masev, 2011).

Congress has been criticized by scholars for overfunding immigration enforcement apparatus (O'Brien et al., 2019). In the 2018 fiscal year, Congress appropriated \$24 billion, for immigration enforcement bureaucracy, which was 34% more than what was allocated for all other federal criminal law enforcement agencies combined, including the FBI, the Drug Enforcement Administration, the Secret Service, the United States Marshals Service, and the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (O'Brien et al., 2019). Due to Congressional failure to deal with immigration presidents have increasingly relied on executive actions to manage immigration issues, strategically targeting certain groups for relief from deportation (Donato & Amuedo-Dorantes, 2020). President Ronald Reagan protected minor children of parents legalized by IRCA from deportation, and President George H. W. Bush later extended this protection to all spouses and unmarried children of IRCA amnesty recipients. The Obama administration stepped up in 2012 with the DACA program, which was later expanded in 2014 to create the Deferred Action for Parents of Americans (DAPA) initiative (Patler et

al., 2019). This was to allow nonenforcement-priority individuals to request temporary protection in the United States. Although executive orders or actions remain lawful and part of any enforcement regime that address important immigration issues, discretionary acts are, by their very nature, ephemeral, and subject to the quirks of politicians and public opinion.

The IBHR

Migration can be a safe, positive, and empowering experience for many migrants and can generate economic, social, and cultural benefits for societies in countries of origin, transit, and destination (Patler et al., 2019). However, many migrants currently face severe human rights violations in countries of origin, transit, and destination without recourse to international human rights principles established in the IBHR. The international legal framework represents the foundation upon which a global compact on safe, orderly, and regular migration should be built. Following the atrocities of the Second World War the United Nations proclaimed international cooperation to promote and respect human rights as one of its objectives (Lougarre, 2020). To advance this objective, the United Nations adopted the UDHR in 1948, the ICCPR, and the ICESCR in 1966. These three documents collectively constitute the IBHR (Lougarre, 2020).

The Preamble of the UDHR affirms the inherent dignity and the equal and inalienable rights of all members of the human family as the foundation of freedom, justice, and peace in the world and Article 2 of the UDHR goes on to assert that “everyone is entitled to all the rights and freedoms set forth in this Declaration” (United Nations, n.d. p. 2)

The UDHR, however, ultimately falls short of the goals that it set to achieve, and that human rights advocates have set for it. In its Preamble, the UDHR claims to be a common standard of achievement for all peoples and all nations (United Nations, n.d.). The negotiating documents, however, reveal a prioritization of the human rights concerns of some people in some nations over those of other people in other nations (Cheng, 2008). At the time the UDHR was established in 1948 only 56 states were present, six of which abstained, while 48 states voted in favor of the Declaration.

As of 2021 the UN constitutes 193 members, implying that approximately 145 states did not have an opportunity to contribute to the drafting and establishment of the Declaration. Therefore, to the extent that human rights advocates and scholars regard the UDHR as a “beacon of the rights movement,” there is a risk that this beacon will guide the development of an international human rights program that inadequately prioritizes the human rights concerns that drafters of the Declaration failed to include. Cheng (2008) opined that the states that were not yet in existence when the Declaration was adopted in 1948 may hold some of these concerns, as they never had an opportunity to shape, accept, or object to the Declaration's provisions. The above analysis could explain why the applicability of the UDHR remains a challenge in recent decades to address human rights violations on legal immigrants in host countries including the United States. It would be illogical to consider a document that did not equally account for the human rights concerns of all peoples and nations to be a common standard of achievement for all.

The Declaration also clarifies in its preamble that law is one of the key modalities for universal and effective observance of human rights, explicitly stating that human

rights should be protected by the rule of law (United Nations, n.d.). However, the Declaration fails to provide a hermeneutic scheme to identify when progressive measures have transformed a particular provision from an aspiration into law. Additionally, the UDHR does not clarify what its provisions mean in concrete terms. Consequently, some legislators have accepted its provisions, while others have rejected them, some government officials and court judges have applied the provisions inconsistently in addressing human rights violations on legal immigrants (Cheng, 2008). While earlier drafts of the Declaration acknowledged that states could grant asylum but did not create an absolute duty for them to do so, the Commission's first and second drafts came much closer to creating a positive duty on states to grant asylum by declaring, in Articles 11 and 12 that everyone shall have the right to seek and be granted asylum from persecution.

Critics of the UDHR have held that national interest rather than universal interest was at the center of the Declaration. Recent events confirm this suspicion that the United States uses the Declaration as a foreign policy tool in its national interests (Cheng, 2008; Patler et al., 2019). The Clinton administration invoked the Declaration to gain diplomatic advantage in negotiations with China over its most favored nation status in United States trade. The George W. Bush administration also used it as a foreign policy tool to attack unfriendly foreign governments. It cited the Declaration to criticize Venezuelan President Hugo Chavez and to express displeasure over Russian laws that controlled nongovernmental organizations sympathetic to United States foreign policy goals. The Bush administration also used the Declaration to support Christian interests in other countries but did not invoke the Declaration to draw any attention to religious rights

of Muslims to practice their faith (Cheng, 2008). These records undermine Article 2 of the Declaration, which stated, “Everyone is entitled to all the rights and freedoms set forth in this Declaration, without distinction of any kind, such as race . . . or religion” (para. 1).

From the foregoing analysis, while the formation of the UDHR indicates good faith efforts at creating a universal bill of human rights, the Cold War politics and groups advocating national or religious interests blurred the prioritization and selection of rights. Accordingly, while the rights the Declaration enshrines are universal to accommodate all individuals everywhere, the Declaration as a whole may not reflect a truly global consensus on the prioritization and selection of rights for inclusion.

The two human rights Covenants (ICCPR and ICESCR) similarly grant to “all” and to “everyone” all the rights contained within those instruments, with very narrow exceptions. Article 25 of the ICCPR reserves to citizens the right to vote and take part in public affairs and Article 12 grants the right of freedom of movement to foreigners provided they are lawfully present in a country (Easley et al., 2001). It is also important to note that the ICCPR guarantees to everyone without discrimination the right to leave and enter any country, including their own country. Article 2(3) of the ICESCR also identifies an exception to the general rule of equal and universal access stating that “developing countries, with due regard to human rights and their national economy, may determine to what extent they would guarantee the economic rights recognized in the present Covenant to non-nationals” (Easley et al., 2001). It is important to note that article 2(3) must be narrowly interpreted, only by developing countries, and refers only to

economic rights. However, economic discrimination is evident in the United States and most developed countries with regards to immigrants (Tsuchiya et al., 2021). Under the ICESCR, states may not discriminate between nationals and non-nationals with respect to social and cultural rights, yet the contrary is prevalent in almost all host countries today. On the other hand, if Article 2(3) is understood as allowing what would now be called middle-income countries the discretion to determine the extent to which they would guarantee economic rights such as the right to work to nonnationals, Article 2(3) of the ICESCR may clash with the universal scope of this treaty (Lougarre, 2020). Such ambiguities in the ICESCR makes it challenging for states to practically implement the Covenant in domestic legislation.

The IBHR provides that every person, without discrimination, must have access to their human rights, obliging states to ensure that any differences of treatment between national and nonnationals or between different groups of nonnationals are enshrined in national legislation (Hamidi, 2020). Such national legislation must serve a legitimate objective, and that any course of action taken to achieve such an objective must itself be proportionate and reasonable. As such, states, committed by legal obligations, have the duty to respect, protect and fulfil the human rights of all migrants (Patler et al., 2019).

U.S. Commitment to the ICESCR

Six decades after its enactment, the rights enshrined in the UDHR were reinforced by a legally binding international treaty, the ICESCR in 1966, and by its Optional Protocol adopted by the UN General Assembly on 10 December 2008 that was opened for signature on 24 September 2009 (Manisuli, 2011). The Optional Protocol to the

ICESCR provides the Committee on Economic Social and Cultural Rights (CESCR) with three roles: (a) to receive and consider individual and group communications claiming a violation of any of the economic, social, and cultural rights set forth in the Covenant; (b) inter-state communications to the effect that a state party claims that another state party is not fulfilling its obligations under the Covenant; and (c) to conduct an inquiry in cases where the Committee receives reliable information indicating grave or systematic violations by a state party of any economic, social, and rights set forth in the ICESCR (Manisuli, 2011).

Despite these positive developments, there are still pertinent questions regarding the status of economic, social, and cultural rights of immigrants in international law. As of July 2022, there were 171 states parties to the ICESCR, 71 states were signatories, and 167 states had ratified the Covenant excluding the United States (UN Treaty Collection, n.d). The ICESCR and the ICCPR along with the UDHR, constitute the core of international human rights law. Article 2(1) of the ICESCR provides that each State Party to the Covenant undertakes to take steps, individually and through international assistance and co-operation, especially economic and technical, to the maximum of its available resources, with a view to achieving progressively the full realization of the rights recognized in the present Covenant by all appropriate means, including particularly the adoption of legislative measures (Manisuli, 2011).

States have a wide range of discretion in selecting the steps considered most appropriate for the full realization of economic social and cultural rights. States are required to use legislative and nonlegislative steps to respect, protect, and fulfil economic

social and cultural rights. Legislative measures provide a firm basis to protect economic, social, and cultural rights, as well as enforcing them in case of violations. According to Article 2(1), whichever steps states choose should be examined by referring to the standard of progressive realization (Manisuli, 2011). This calls for a continuous improvement in the conditions of economic, social, and cultural rights.

Although the United States has played a dynamic role in drafting the international human rights treaties that shaped the framing and enforcement of human rights, the United States faces a discord between its commitment to drafting these treaties and its commitment to implementing such international law in domestic practice. Despite its key role in drafting the ICESCR, the U.S. Senate's failure to ratify the Covenant poses a struggle to fully embrace the IBHR (Hamidi, 2020). Though the United States played a leading role in drafting both foundational human rights treaties (ICCPR and ICESCR), and signed both in 1977 under the Carter administration, the ICESCR has been shelved in the Foreign Affairs committee with no hopes of ratification. During the Reagan administration, the advocacy for a trickledown economics internationally devalued the notion of economic rights, associating such rights with the Eastern Bloc and thus branding them inconsistent with the free market capitalism (Hamidi, 2020). This heightened political opposition to all efforts at ratifying the ICESCR. The Bush administrations ascribed no value to the ICESCR on the domestic level. This lack of advocacy from the executive power to prioritize or give prominence to the Covenant perpetually sidelined it from political priorities.

The separation of powers between the three arms of government (executive, legislative, and judiciary) as per the United States Constitution makes the process of treaty ratification very complex. The executive's role as the negotiator and signer of international treaty requires a supermajority (2/3rd) vote of approval by the United States Senate (Manisuli, 2011). This makes it a Senate's constitutional duty to determine the ratification of treaties in the United States, a duty which cannot be overrun by the executive irrespective of the political views of the president. As such, the legislative and executive branch may have competing views on the appropriateness to ratify the ICESCR with respect to domestic law. The executive and legislative arms of government are divided on the extent of implementation of the ICESCR and the political aftermath of such actions (Hamidi, 2020). The ICESCR clearly protects immigrant's economic, social, and cultural rights in its preamble by explicitly recognizing that economic, social, and cultural rights derive from the inherent dignity of the human person (Lougarre, 2020). The failure to ratify the ICESCR indicates that the United States is reluctant to wholly endorse the interdependence of human rights and the domestic enforcement of the ICESCR (Hamidi, 2020). This directly affects the degree of protection offered by the United States to the economic, social, and cultural rights of legal immigrants.

The Nature of Human Rights Violations Against Legal Immigrants in Minnesota Discrimination in Employment

With the swearing in of Donald Trump as the President of the United States, anti-immigrant sentiment among Trump supporters grew stronger and became more prominent across the United States. As of January 2017, over 700 incidents of "racist

harassment and intimidation” had been counted by the Southern Poverty Law Center across the United States. (Wasem, 2020). These incidents have occurred at schools, college campuses, businesses, places of worship and private homes. In Minnesota, Latino students have been taunted with “build a wall” and “go back to Mexico” chants, while Asians have been harassed for spreading the Corona virus (Wasem, 2020). Islamophobia has been on the rise as well across Minnesota with Somalis facing the brunt of it at schools, workplaces, and shopping centers.

Danso and Lum (2013) compared immigrant groups according to ethnicity in Minnesota and found that Hispanic, Asian, and East African immigrants experienced hostile treatment by citizens at much higher rates than immigrants from other parts of the world. Among Hispanic, Asian, and East African immigrants, Hispanics reported the most hostile treatment and East Africans reported the least hostile treatment. This discrepancy may be due to the fact that in the Twin Cities, Hispanic immigrants are more likely to be undocumented than are Asian and East African immigrants, who are primarily refugees (Danso & Lum, 2013). Racial profiling has contributed greatly to various forms of discrimination in Minnesota. Nearly one-third of immigrants in Minnesota believe that discrimination is a regular experience for members of their race or ethnicity (Wasem, 2020).

Although the purpose of Minnesota Human Rights Act is to protect workers in Minnesota from unlawful discrimination in employment, the credentials and training attained by workers from other countries are often considered not align with United States standards (Danso & Lum, 2013). This forces immigrants in Minnesota to take

aptitude tests or repeat trainings and courses at their own expense even if they completed such requirements in their nations of origin. This has made several immigrants in Minnesota take up jobs for which they are overqualified or unskilled jobs just to meet up with their bills and other expenses. Language barriers cause conflicts between job duties and English lessons as immigrants sometimes face a paradox in which they need to attain greater levels of English fluency but would have to miss work that provides vital income to attend these language classes (Wasem, 2020). This limits their economic ability to take care of their needs and those of other family members. Unequal labor market outcomes are not a consequence of the labor market alone but also reflect the institutionalization of systemic racism through less opportunity in education, housing, location, and the criminal justice system.

Disparities in Access to High Quality Education

Rolnick and Grunewald (2003) showed that investments in young children have high social returns. In Minnesota, Mexican, Somali, and Hmong children face barriers to accessing high-quality early childhood education. Inequitable access to high-quality K-12 education in Minnesota has resulted in some of the state's largest gaps in educational outcomes by race, ethnicity, and immigration status. White students in Minnesota have higher average standardized-test scores and graduation rates than children of color and Black children, with those from immigrant families scoring even lower. An analysis of postsecondary enrollment and graduation records found that students of color, Blacks, and immigrant children who attended higher-poverty high schools are more likely to need remedial work, take longer to complete college, and drop out of college (Leibert, 2018).

This limits the ability of children from immigrant families to compete at equal levels on available socioeconomic opportunities.

Housing Affordability

Despite the resilience of immigrants, many systemic barriers have been created to determine what populations have the most access to housing and where in Minnesota. For many immigrants even today, the dream of securing a safe, healthy, and affordable home is out of reach. Years after they arrive in Minnesota, many immigrants face significant and urgent challenges finding and maintaining adequate and affordable housing (MartinRogers et al., 2016). A growing number of immigrants in Minnesota pay more than they can afford for housing, forcing them to live in substandard conditions or forgo other necessities like food, healthcare, or transportation. These challenges disproportionately impact communities of color, including immigrants. While the number of foreign-born residents in the Twin Cities is on the rise, the vacancy rate for apartments in the Twin Cities remains low, creating a difficult, crowded market for affordable housing options. These challenges persist in home ownership, as well, with immigrant and people of color far less likely to own their homes than White households.

Among Hmong immigrants, overcrowding is the single most important and commonly reported housing issue. The challenges of finding housing that will accommodate their large households abound. On average, many of these families have a household size of between six and eight people. Finding a unit with an appropriate number of bedrooms is a challenge (Chang, 2000). Additionally, as many Hmong immigrants are jobless or working in low-paying occupations, being able to afford rent is

a huge challenge. Hmong immigrants also face barriers when they are ready to buy a home, which translates to very low rates of homeownership. Credit history is a challenge because most Hmong families tend to use cash when making transactions, hence they cannot build up a qualifying history of credit when they want to buy a home.

One of the biggest housing challenges in the Mexican immigrant community is the lack of affordable housing. Many Mexican immigrants often reside in housing units with many health and quality hazards, including lead paint and roach infestations. Like Hmong and Somali immigrant families, Latino immigrant families also have large household sizes. When they are able to find housing, as many as 12 to 20 people can be found sharing a single-family housing unit, which exposes them to poor or unhealthy living conditions (MartinRogers et al., 2016). Mexican immigrants in Minnesota also experience low rate of homeownership, induced by a lack of credit history and predatory practices. For many Mexican immigrants, due to lack of credit history, finding a co-signer is almost impossible when trying to buy a home. Some Mexican immigrants have reported that some banks take advantage of their lack of knowledge and over charge them on closing fees (MartinRogers et al., 2016).

Among Somali immigrants, overcrowding is the single most important and commonly reported housing issue in Minnesota. Like the Hmong and Mexican immigrants, many Somali families have large household sizes. One of the biggest challenges that Somali immigrants face is finding a home that fits all their family members. Somali immigrants also experience issues of discriminatory practices from landlords, high rents, substandard living conditions, and long waiting lists for subsidized

housing. Some Somali homeowners in Brooklyn Park experienced significant foreclosures in recent years (MartinRogers et al., 2016). As a result, many Somali families have been displaced and forced to relocate to small and unsafe apartment units, which further compounds the issues of overcrowding and substandard housing.

Disparities in Health and Wellbeing

Exposure to racial discrimination and its associated socioeconomic disadvantage is a potentially important aspect of life for immigrants in the United States. Such stressors may combine with others related to the migration process, including adjustment to new places, a new language, and different social expectations. This combination of stressors may lead to detrimental health behaviors adopted as coping mechanisms, poor access to quality healthcare, and, ultimately, worse physical and mental health outcomes among immigrants (Engelman & Ye, 2019). While pandemics such as the COVID-19 does not discriminate based on immigration status, the social and political systems in which immigrants work and live do discriminate (Horner et al., 2022). The COVID-19 pandemic exposed the harsh realities of inequities within the U.S. immigration system that have long existed and denied immigrant, refugee, and asylum seeker populations of their rights to adequate health and wellbeing (Okonkwo et al., 2020). After accounting for age and gender differences across groups, Horner et al. (2022) found that foreign-born Minnesotans died at twice the rate of U.S.-born Minnesotans due to COVID-19. They also found that the peaks in COVID-19 mortality at the end of 2020 within long-term care facilities overshadow the experience of immigrant communities, which faced high

early mortality rates and significant losses among those living outside long term care (Horner et al., 2022).

Many disparities exist in cancer diagnosis, treatment, and mortality confronting Mexican, Hmong, and Somali immigrants in Minnesota. These immigrant groups are also dying at a much higher rate compared to their U.S.-born White counterpart, due in part to lack of access to primary care services (Okonkwo et al., 2020). There are significant barriers to the above three migrant group's ability to access education about cancer and cancer care. Some of these barriers include communication barriers, cultural factors, limited or lack of health insurance, challenges in obtaining adequate education and work, lack of affordable care, decreased self-care knowledge, personal or family values, and the healthcare belief system (Gany et al., 2013). These barriers play a role in the declining health status and poorer health outcomes for immigrants in Minnesota. The lack of insurance and poor finances limit immigrant communities' ability to access and obtain healthcare in Minnesota.

The Trump administration's anti-immigration policies, which targeted, Mexican, Somali, and, to an extent, Asian immigrants, in Minnesota engendered mental and emotional discord among healthcare providers and ancillary staff who care for immigrants frequently (Kabwe, 2021). These health personnel were repeatedly exposed to trauma they were untrained or prepared for such as fear, anxiety, and family separation caused by Trump's hardline policies. Health personnel experienced increased challenges as they attempted to provide health care services to these immigrant communities. Also, financial limitation and gaps in employment are of significant influence on the health

care decision-making for immigrants in Minnesota and use of regular professional healthcare providers (Gany et al., 2013).

Disparities in Arrest, Detention, Access to Legal Representation, and Deportation

Legal immigrants face specific and unique challenges in the United States. Their wellbeing is constantly under threat due to increasingly restrictive and xenophobic policies that diminish their human rights. Human rights provide a framework for the protection of people's human dignity, freedom, health, and quality of life (Mapp et al., 2019). The cornerstone for the rights of people forcibly displaced is the 1951 *Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees* and the 1967 *Protocol* (UN, 1951, 1967). The most significant is the right to nonrefoulement (Article 33), which guarantees against being forcibly returned to the country from which someone has fled. This shields the asylum seeker from further persecution in their country of origin.

The United States immigration policy has developed over 100 years of converging criminal law and immigration (Crenshaw, 2017). This trend toward punitive and restrictive immigration policy, known as *crimmigration*, has accelerated in the last 2 decades whereby detention is used to deter, and immigrants are perceived as threats to socioeconomic stability and security in the United States (Androff & Mathis, 2022). After 9/11, President Bush directed militarization and securitization of the United States – Mexican border to prevent immigrants from entering the United States. Under the Obama administration, the deportation rates skyrocketed despite providing rights and security to children of immigrants through DACA. The Trump administration's zero-tolerance policy escalated immigrant family detention and implemented child separation policies

with an intention to overturn DACA (Mapp et al., 2019). With massive refolement under the Trump administration and early into the Biden administration, the right to due process (Fifth Amendment) is abrogated by expedited removal and streamlining procedures, and the right to legal counsel (Sixth Amendment) is avoided by the civil nature of immigration charges. Almost 70% of the 59,747 asylum cases decided in fiscal year 2020 lost their petitions (Androff & Mathis, 2022). The consequences of losing asylum cases range from detention, deportation, and the risk of death when returned to their country of origin.

In Minnesota, immigrants detained by ICE are held in one of five facilities that are operated or subcontracted by the Department of Homeland Security (Tsuchiya et al., 2021). ICE maintains subcontracts with county jails in Carver, Freeborn, Nobles, Ramsey, and Sherburne counties to house long-term immigration detainees. Each facility is responsible for the treatment of detainees in its custody, which further complicates compliance with ICE detention standards (Tsuchiya et al., 2021). Lawful permanent residents, refugees, and asylees in Minnesota end up in civil immigration detention through various channels including arrests at worksite raids or in homes, random stops for civil violations, and arrests or convictions for crimes (Wasem, 2020). Despite their rights to due process (Fifth Amendment), Minnesota courts do not appoint immigration attorneys to represent indigent immigrants detained for civil immigration law violations. As such, immigrants must find a pro bono attorney or private lawyer willing to take their cases or forego representation all together (Danso & Lum, 2013).

Impacts of Human Rights Violations on Legal Immigrants in Minnesota

Health and Well-Being

In the United States, heightened immigration enforcement in recent years, including historic levels of deportation, has resulted in negative impacts on health and well-being. Numerous studies have demonstrated the detrimental impact of detention, deportation, and the mere fear of these on immigrants' mental health and family relationships. In a study conducted by Brabeck and Xu (2010) with 132 Latino immigrant parents, 48.5% reported that deportation affected their children's emotional wellbeing, and 45.5% reported that deportation negatively impacted their children's academic performance. Nearly 10% of families in the United States are of mixed immigration status, so antiimmigration policy directly affects a substantial segment of the population, harming citizens as well as immigrants (Brabeck & Xu, 2010). It has been estimated that for every two deported immigrants, one citizen child is directly impacted. When parents with citizen children are deported, they are forced to choose between tearing their children away from their homeland in the interest of family unity and leaving them in someone else's care with the hope that they will be one day reunited (Danso & Lum, 2013). In cases where child protection is involved, a parent's deportation can result in loss of parental rights if ICE and child protection do not communicate with each other, and the child protection agency assumes that the parent is willfully neglecting to communicate with the child protection agency (Brabeck & Xu, 2010).

In Minnesota, the deportation of a parent or both parents leave children with challenges including economic hardship, housing instability, food insecurity, and

separation from parents. Children also experience behavioral changes in sleeping habits, eating, and emotional changes such as increased anxiety, aggression, crying, anger, a heightened sense of fear, and withdrawal (Tsuchiya et al., 2021). Research has shown that being and staying healthy is a fundamental right of every human being and a prerequisite for all people to work, be productive, contribute to economic and social development in both countries of origin and destination, and improve livelihoods (Gany et al., 2013). During the peak of the COVID-19 pandemic, disparities in health outcomes among social groups in the United States and in Minnesota became increasingly evident (Webb et al., 2020). While experiencing the stress of adapting to a new environment with limited access to healthcare, support of family members, social connections, and other resources, immigrants and refugees are frequently faced with horizontal inequalities, which restrict their rights to health and those resources needed to support their health in Minnesota (Castaneda, 2015).

In low-income working families in Minnesota, most children are covered by either employer-provided or public health insurance. However, many children lack health insurance altogether, especially children in low-income working immigrant families who are more than twice as likely as those in comparable U.S.-born families to lack health insurance coverage, which exposes them to myriads of health risks (Brabeck & Xu, 2010). This does not only affect children as the share of immigrant adults in low-income working families without health insurance is double the share of uninsured children in these families. While adults are more likely than children to be covered under an employer-provided health plan, they are far less likely to be covered through Medicaid or

another public program as do children who received public health insurance coverage through Medicaid or the State Children's Health Insurance Program (Castaneda, 2015).

Limited Access to Meaningful Employment

The two most significant barriers to sustained economic growth in Minnesota are the increasingly tight labor markets and a growing shortage of workers. This has made it more evident now than ever, that immigration remains a pivotal source of workforce that cannot be ignored by employers in the state (Castaneda, 2015). Discrimination based on people's origin remains a major challenge for legal immigrants to gain access to meaningful employment in Minnesota. Because their foreign earned educational degrees, licenses and credentials are not usually recognized by professional organizations and employers in the United States, some high skilled legal immigrants who received their training abroad are underemployed in Minnesota due to lack of options for meaningful employment (Tsuchiya et al., 2021). This leaves them with less income to meet the needs of their often-large families not only in the United States but also back home. As a result, despite similar levels of work effort among their parents, children of immigrants are substantially more likely than children with United States-born parents to be poor, have food-related problems, live in crowded housing, lack health insurance, and be in fair or poor health (Gany et al., 2013).

Racial discrimination by Minnesota employers plays an important role in generating the racial disparities seen in the labor market, especially among immigrants. The existence of "at will" employment in Minnesota leaves the discretion to hire using both economically relevant considerations such as the applicant's skills, and irrelevant or

illegal considerations like applicant's race or ethnicity, is entirely the employer's choice (Chambers, 2017). This has entrenched hiring discrimination in Minnesota, despite legal prohibitions. While the 2019 unemployment rate for U.S.-born workers with a high school degree or less was 4.9%, Black and Latino/a workers in Minnesota with the same education had unemployment rates of 8.2% (Burr et al., 2010).

Poor Housing Conditions

Some of the key housing barriers for the Mexican, Somali, and Hmong immigrant communities include a shortage of affordable housing, discriminatory practices by property owners, lack of quality of housing, and overcrowding (Tsuchiya et al., 2021). Overcrowding is a problem among the many large immigrant families who reside in small single-family units in the Twin Cities (Chambers, 2017). Most immigrant households in the Twin Cities metropolitan area pay more than 30% of their income on housing, which constraints them financially medical expenses, food, other bills, and a decent lifestyle. This has left many immigrants in Minnesota with limited housing options, which often expose them to unsafe housing conditions such as high lead levels, poor insulation in extreme weather, and pest infestations (Lincoln et al., 2021). Many communities lack alternative, accessible housing options, causing immigrants to remain in unsafe housing.

It is characteristic of immigrant families to be larger than the average United States-born families, and immigrant households are often a mixture of nuclear and extended family members (Brabeck & Xu, 2010). Attaining homes that can accommodate such large households becomes difficult for immigrant families due to limited income or

lack of resources. As a result, immigrants in Minnesota are likely to live in situations of overcrowding, foregoing neighborhood safety and quality of the house (Burr et al., 2010). Also, discriminatory practices by landlords affect immigrants' ability to afford quality housing in Minnesota. Discrimination against immigrant tenants remain a common practice among landlords in Minnesota who discriminate based on family size or maximum occupancy, preferring native-born individuals over immigrants with large families (Lincoln et al., 2021).

Educational Success

Low levels of formal education and LEP poses barriers to the integration of immigrant parents making it challenging for them to support their children's educational success (Chambers, 2017). English proficiency is an important marker of immigrants' integration and a significant component of their capacity to access higher-wage jobs and support their children's education (Hofstetter & McHugh, 2021). With the expansion of online learning due to COVID-19, LEP parents, in linguistically isolated households, faced new challenges to provide support and participate in their children's education due to language barriers. Apart from hindering the integration and well-being of immigrant parents, low-income levels also negatively affect the healthy development, school readiness, and educational success of children from immigrant homes in Minnesota (Burr et al., 2010).

Research has shown that immigrant parents in Minnesota are significantly more likely to be low-income than United States -born parents (Hernandez & Charney, 1998). These disproportionate levels of poverty experienced by immigrant parents of young and

elementary-school-age children in Minnesota, and the strong relationship between poverty and low levels of formal education that exists among these parents is detrimental to the educational success of children from immigrant families (Castaneda, 2015). Poverty compounds two-generation challenges that low levels of parental education can pose, while the financial constraints it brings make overcoming these challenges even more difficult.

Summary and Transition

According to the literature reviewed, human rights violations on legal immigrants in Minnesota remains an immanent reality. Although immigrants escape persecution, financial instability, and other inhumane conditions from their countries of origin in search of security, greener pastures, and safety in the United States, living as an immigrant in the United States can be a nightmare. Despite their pivotal role in the socioeconomic fabric of Minnesota, immigrants continue to experience human rights violations as they struggle with integration challenges in the state. While human rights violations on immigrants dates back over four decades ago, Tsuchiya et al. (2021) opined that federal immigration enforcement policies like the Customs and Border Protection policy under the Trump Administration intensified arbitrary arrest, detention, discrimination, and deportation of many legal immigrants without due process in Minnesota. This has left a negative impact on immigrant populations in Minnesota, limiting their ability to afford, healthcare, decent housing, quality education, raise bond fees, and obtain legal representation.

Immigrants in Minnesota experience human rights violation at the place of work, in accessing healthcare or health insurance, decent housing, quality education, and in the court systems. Legal immigrants in Minnesota remain vulnerable to challenges brought about by social-structural factors that limit their security options and make their integration in the United States very difficult. The ambiguities in the IBHR also poses a huge challenge for adoption into the United States domestic legal systems as a tool to curb human rights violations on legal immigrants. The susceptibilities of legal immigrants in Minnesota can be attributed to tiered social structures and power relations enforced through policies, practices, and laws concerning immigrants' legal status and other attributes. While factors like LEP compromise immigrants' access to socioeconomic amenities, several federal policies enacted over the past decades have had consequential impact on immigrants' access to health care, including the 2010 Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (ACA), Trump's zero-tolerance policies and anti-immigration rhetoric.

By gaining an understanding of the initiating factors, the nature and impact of human rights violations on legal immigrants in Minnesota, this study adds to the literature on immigrants' human rights violations, the flaws in the IBHR, and the apathy of the United States to curb this menace using the IBHR. The proceeding chapter provides details on how this study was implemented, including the participants, data collection methods, and data analysis procedures.

Chapter 3: Research Method

Introduction

The purpose of this study was to use the knowledge gained from participants' responses through individual interviews and focus group discussions to provide information that may contribute to policy reforms considerations to improve the treatment of legal immigrants, by exploring how legal immigrants of Mexican, Somali, and Hmong descents experiences human rights violations in Minnesota. Interviews were conducted with human rights experts and immigration advocates, while focus group discussions were held among Mexican, Somali, and Hmong legal immigrants to delve into their lived experiences of human rights violations in Minnesota. Purposive sampling was used to select research participants. The findings and recommendations of the study may contribute to reforms in U.S. domestic immigration policies and practices, specifically enhancing the treatment of legal immigrants in Minnesota.

This chapter presents detailed information on the selected methodology, the design, and the rationale used to answer the research question of this qualitative phenomenological study. The research question for the study is presented, along with details on the logic and strategy in selecting participants, collection of data, and data analysis strategies. In this chapter, I also expound on instrumentation, my role as the researcher, and issues of trustworthiness including credibility, dependability, confirmability, and ethical procedures of this research. Finally, a summary of the main points of this chapter is presented.

Research Design and Rationale

This study was conducted using a qualitative phenomenological approach. Tomaszewski et al. (2020) noted that a phenomenological approach to qualitative research focuses on the essence of a lived experience that is observable or felt by individuals with different views. Capturing as closely as possible the way a phenomenon was lived by the people who participated in the phenomenon is the main objective of phenomenology (Neubauer et al., 2019). As a philosophical tradition, phenomenology emphasizes the understanding of human experiences from the first-person perspective, focusing on the essence of experiences as they are lived (Heidegger, 1927; Husserl, 1931). According to Sundler et al. (2019), a qualitative study is one in which the researcher collects data in the natural setting or environment. This study was conducted using both individual interviews and focus group discussions.

The integration of focus groups and individual interviews contributed to the study in three ways: it converged the central characteristics of human rights violations on legal immigrants across focus groups and individual interviews to enhance the trustworthiness of the findings; it led to a productive iterative process where an initial model of the phenomenon guided the exploration of individual accounts and successive individual data to enrich the conceptualization of the phenomenon; and it helped in the identification of individual and contextual circumstances surrounding human rights violations against legal immigrants in Minnesota (Lambert & Loiselle, 2008). Knowing the lived experiences of human rights violations against legal immigrants in Minnesota helped in expanding existing literature on immigration from the current focus on the treatment of

undocumented immigrants to the treatment of documented or legal immigrants, and how this impacts their social wellbeing and that of their families. This aligned with Husserl's emphasis on the *lifeworld*; the world as experienced in the immediacy of the lived experiences, prior to reflection or conceptualization (Husserl, 1936). By exploring the lived experiences of legal immigrants, this research focused on their being-in-the-world and how they make sense of their experiences. It also resonates with Heidegger's focus on Dasein or being-in-the-world, and his exploration of how individuals make sense of their existence and experiences (Heidegger, 1927). This research addressed the misconception that legal immigrants do not face violations of their human rights as their undocumented counterparts do. I developed the interview questions and focus group discussion guides used to conduct both individual interviews and focus group discussions.

The participants in the study were Mexican, Somali, and Hmong legal immigrants with direct and personal experience of the study phenomenon. Through elucidating how the participants made sense of the phenomenon, this study provides valuable information for policy reforms aimed at improving the treatment of immigrants in the state, as well as addressing the specific research topics in this study.

Rooted in understanding lived experiences and perceptions, phenomenology provided a methodological framework that allowed me to delve deeply into the subjective realities of individuals, emphasizing the importance of examining conscious experiences to uncover the impact of human rights violations against legal immigrants (see Giorgi, 2009). As a particularly vulnerable population, the lack of access to basic necessities like proper healthcare, education, housing, legal representation, and due process had a

significant impact on the choices immigrants made for themselves and their families. By adopting this approach, I gained access to rich, context-specific narratives that might inform policy considerations for improving the human rights situation of legal immigrants in Minnesota (see Smith et al., 2009). In this study, human experience symbolized the lived experiences that are separate from the things that are presented or intended (see Husserl, 2001). The narratives obtained through individual interviews and focus group discussions served as symbolic representations, revealing layers of subjective realities and challenges faced by legal immigrants that extend beyond the surface-level presentation or intended policies, providing a nuanced understanding that may help to inform targeted and effective policy reforms. Through phenomenology, the study elevated the voices of the research participants and their communities, contributing nuanced insights that might be essential for shaping more equitable and just policies.

Research Question

The research question for this study was as follows: How do legal immigrants of Mexican, Somali, and Hmong descent experience human rights violations in Minnesota as a vulnerable population?

Role of the Researcher

A significant concern with this study was my potential bias as the researcher as I am also an immigrant. As the primary data collector and sole data collecting tool, it became crucial to address the potential bias that might have surfaced in the research. Although being a legal immigrant living in Minnesota, I did not have any personal or direct experience of human rights violations, and I had no professional or personal

relationships with the participants. Thus, as the interviewer and researcher, I was open-minded during the interviewing and focus group discussion process. While researching the lived experiences, I remained open to the lifeworld of the participant as I emphasized the phenomenon. I allowed the participants to share their experiences according to how they lived it. Also, I may have understood the phenomenon in a new light and seen things previously unseen by other studies. This was accomplished by setting aside previous experiences, assumptions, and continuous questioning. I refrained from postulating my sense of reality onto the participant's experiences (Sundler et al., 2019). I focused on obtaining responses only from the interviewing guide questions to the participants. I ensured that the interview guide questions were objective with the aim of capturing the lived experiences of participants with their own voices. I framed the interviewing questions in a manner that did not reflect my positionality.

Methodology

Participant Selection Logic

The target population for the study was legal immigrants from Mexico, Somalia, and Hmong populations. Purposive sampling was used to select participants. According to Patton (2002), purposive sampling is generally used in qualitative research to identify and select information-rich participants to maximize the use of limited resources. I identified and selected individuals and groups of individuals that were especially knowledgeable about or experienced with human rights violations against legal immigrants in Minnesota (see Palinkas et al., 2015). In addition to knowledge and experience, the importance of availability and willingness to participate, and the ability to

communicate experiences and opinions in an articulate, expressive, and reflective manner made purposive sampling very suitable for this qualitative phenomenological research (see Bernard, 2002; Spradley, 1979).

For individual interviews, five human rights experts and four immigration advocates were identified through referrals from my network of friends and colleagues. After connecting me with the potential participants, I made initial contact with each participant to determine their ability and willingness to provide valuable data for the research. Once I established that a participant was proficient in English, had lived in Minnesota for at least 5 years, and was willing to participate in the study, I proceeded to recruit three human rights experts and two immigration advocates. The two immigration advocates and three human rights experts who were selected based on their expertise, knowledge, and experiences in relation to the phenomenon under study only participated in individual interviews and not in the focus group discussions. These five individual interviews aided in gaining insight into the perceptions, understandings, and experiences of human rights violations against legal immigrants in Minnesota. These interviewees were not required to be members of the Somali, Hmong, and Mexican communities under study. They were purposefully selected based on their profession, expertise, experience as advocates for immigrants, and their ability to provide data relating to key immigration and human rights principles.

For the focus group discussions eight potential Mexicans, seven potential Somalis, and four potential Hmong were identified. Through snowballing, I found three more potential Hmong participants. After initial contact to determine English proficiency,

duration in Minnesota, availability, and willingness to participate in the research, I recruited five Mexicans, five Somalis, and five Hmong legal immigrants living in Minnesota. The focus group discussions were conducted in three groups comprising five Mexicans, five Somalis, and five Hmong legal immigrants each; all focus group participants had personal or direct experience with human rights violations in Minnesota. These discussions provided data on the participants' descriptions, perceptions, and lived experiences of human rights violations against legal immigrants in the state. The individual perceptions of the participants helped in understanding the meaning of their experiences both as individuals and as social groups. In these focus groups, participants voiced their perceptions through storytelling, narratives, behaviors, and reactions to individuals or groups (see Bernard, 2013; Stake, 2006; Yin, 2017). Data from the focus group discussions were used to construct codes for analysis.

The focus group participants were specifically selected from the three immigrant communities under study as they represented the diverse and dominant demographics of Hispanic, African, and Asian immigrant populations in Minnesota. Each group met separately with me to provide data relating to their experience of human rights violations as legal immigrants living in Minnesota. The use of individual interviews and focus group discussions provided in-depth data from legal immigrants, human rights, and immigration experts to assess the responsiveness of the State of Minnesota to the vulnerabilities of legal immigrants as envisioned in Fineman's vulnerability theory (see Kohn, 2014).

In line with Alhazmi and Kaufmann (2022), the main objective of a purposive sample was to produce a sample that could be logically assumed to be representative of the population under study. The choice of purposive sampling aligned with this study because by selecting individuals and groups with specific knowledge and or experience with human rights violations against legal immigrants, I was able to discover, understand, gain insight, and describe the lived experiences of human rights violations against legal immigrants in Minnesota. The purposive sampling technique was effective as a limited number of participants served as a primary source of data due to the nature of the research design, time, and objectives (see Vehovar et al., 2016).

The research design for this study was informed by descriptive phenomenological method with thematic-based analysis, a method often used for analyzing qualitative data, typically applied to texts such as interview and focus group transcripts. The process for this study included collecting primary data through one-on-one interviews with three human rights experts and two immigration advocates who had experience and were knowledgeable on immigration and human rights issues in the United States. Combining the expert interviews not only provided data to construct codes but also facilitated linking the macro and micro levels of analysis of the study.

I conducted the study using phenomenological inquiry, an open-ended, emergent design, documenting details and events that chronicled the personal experiences of Mexican, Somali, and Hmong legal immigrants in Minnesota (see Roulston, 2011). I focused on participants' experiences of human rights violations against legal immigrants to obtain comprehensive details that provided a basis for reflective structural analysis,

potentially revealing the essence of their experience. I also analyzed recordings of both interviews and focus group discussions to discover new data that might be useful for the research.

Data were collected through semistructured interviews and focus group discussions. Both individual interviews and focus group discussions were audio and video digitally recorded and transcribed, documenting the exact words for contextual perspective later in the analysis (see Al-Yateem, 2012). I met with participants in neutral locations such as public libraries or community meeting rooms, and other public locations. I conducted one-on-one interviews in-person. Using a descriptive phenomenological approach, I analyzed the descriptions given by participants and divided them into meaning-laden statements and themes guided by Fineman's vulnerability categories. I then gathered the meanings that were essential to human rights violations against legal immigrants and documented them to provide firsthand depictions of the lived experiences of the research participants who were directly affected by human rights violations in Minnesota. This level of detail and exposure might help policy makers to comprehend how this phenomenon affected the wellbeing and welfare of immigrants, and hopefully helped to engender some policy changes to improve the treatment of immigrants in Minnesota.

The interviews were audio recorded, and I took notes while asking questions and actively listening to the participant's experiences to avoid losing or degrading the answers through translation from the audio recorder. Note-taking also allowed me to think deeply about what the participant was saying, which led to follow-up questions.

Other instruments for this study included transcriptions, and a journal for record-keeping of my own unwanted biases, feelings, and reactions about the study.

Instrumentation

In this study, I was the research instrument (see Rudestam, 2015). I conducted individual interviews with two immigration advocates and three human rights experts, using semistructured interview questions. I facilitated three focus group discussions with at least five legal immigrants each from the Mexican, Somali, and Hmong immigrant populations. For the five in-depth interviews, I was open to either in-person face-to-face interviews or using an electronic application such as Zoom or Skype, depending on the convenience and preferred interview method of each participant. I ended up conducting all the interviews in person due to the comfort level of the participants.

From the reviewed literature and research question, I developed interview guides for both individual interviews and focus groups to ensure the same questions were asked to individual interviewees and focus groups. Each of the participants was asked the exact open-ended questions that were provided to them before the scheduled interview via email. The focus groups generated data related to the lived experiences of the participants on human rights violations. Group interaction facilitated an exchange of ideas and information, thereby stimulating individual group members' thinking and allowing group members to build on each other's responses. During individual interviews, I repeated the same set of questions and maintained the same personal demeanor with each interviewee (see Yin, 2016, p. 135). In line with Yin (2016), when interviewees provided insufficient information on a given topic, I initiated probes, and follow-up questions to stimulate the

participant to expand upon the original topic. Combining individual interviews and focus groups provided in-depth data for a more comprehensive understanding of the phenomenon under study.

I used ATLAS.ti for coding and data analysis. ATLAS.ti is a computer-assisted qualitative data analysis software that analyzes, stores, manages, and shapes qualitative data. The software allowed me to make decisions about assigning codes, categories, concepts, and patterns of the data (see Moser & Korstjens, 2018). I also used a codebook, to describe the content, structure, and layout of collected data. The codebook was well documented to contain information intended to be complete and self-explanatory (see Appendix A). The codebook helped me to stay organized in qualitative coding and served as a reference throughout the study (see Ritchie et al., 2022).

Data Collection Procedure

As sole data collector, I was responsible for collecting and maintaining the collected data throughout the research. I ensured the identity of the participants was protected at all times. I used P1 to P5 to identify individual interview participants, M1 to M5 to identify Mexican focus group participants, S1 to S5 to identify Somali focus group participants, and H1 to H5 to identify Hmong focus group participants. No participant was contacted before Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval. I did not ask participants to state their name, age, or any identifying characteristics during the recorded interviews and focus groups.

Before data collection, all interview and focus group discussion participants received an email with a consent form and confirmation of the date, time, and location. I

reminded them that their participation was voluntary, and that they could terminate the interview at any time. All participants completed the consent form before the interview, and before the focus group discussions, and I discussed any questions or concerns related to the interview or focus group discussion process with the participants. Before any recording, I obtained verbal permission from each participant to ensure they were aware and comfortable with using any recording devices for the purpose of collecting data (see Hancock & Algozzine, 2017). I used an iPad and a smart phone to record individual interviews and focus group discussions. The data were collected through semistructured individual interviews and focus group discussions. This approach assisted in addressing the research question, with each interview and focus group discussion being electronically recorded and transcribed in preparation for data analysis.

Data Analysis Plan

In preparing the data for analysis, I ensured that each semistructured interview question aligned with the research question. This alignment enabled me to adhere to the interview protocol, supporting the data collection and analysis process.

After transcribing the semistructured interviews and focus group discussions, I began open coding using a constant comparative method. The constant comparative method involves the systematic deconstruction of data into discrete components, followed by coding these components and comparing the resultant codes to uncover similarities and differences. This iterative process enables researchers to discern patterns and establish categories (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). This method proved most suitable for the study as it allowed for the breakdown, examination, comparison, conceptualization,

and categorization of the data (see Lin, 2017). The constant comparative method was particularly appropriate for this study because it facilitated the sorting and organizing of excerpts of raw data into groups based on attributes. By systematically deconstructing the data into discrete components, coding these components and comparing the resultant codes to uncover similarities and differences, constant comparative aided in grouping the data in a structured way to formulate and better understand the participants' lived experiences of human rights violations against legal immigrants (see Creswell & Poth, 2018). As I completed the data analysis, I also finished the coding process by labeling concepts, defining, and developing categories to identify emerging themes from the data.

An inductive coding approach was used, which aligned with the phenomenological research design by allowing for the conversion of raw, qualitative data into more manageable data, which could be studied within the theoretical framework of this study (see Liu, 2016). Following these procedures ensured that the interview protocol, the theoretical framework, and research question were interconnected.

I used inductive thematic analysis to analyze the collected data. A codebook was created, listing the codes used in the data analysis (see Appendix A). This codebook described the contents, structure, and layout of the collected data and was thoroughly documented to contain complete and self-explanatory information in a data file (see Ritchie et al., 2022). It also provided context for anyone examining the data after analysis, offering a clearer understanding of the coding decisions. Codes were generated from the interviews and focus group discussions and were updated as necessary during

analysis to keep the codebook current. Seven major themes and several subthemes emerged from the collected data, as well as categories and codes, as shown in Table 1.

Table 1*Themes, Subthemes, Categories, and Codes*

No.	Themes	Subthemes	Categories	Codes
1	Experiences of educational discrimination	Difficulty accessing quality education Harassment and bullying in school	Educational access and quality School environment and safety	Language barriers, lack of access to quality education, disparities in healthcare and educational outcomes, psychological impact of deportation threats on academic performance Discrimination based on appearance, bullying, impact on mental health and academic performance
2	Experiences of workplace discrimination	Experiences of being denied employment or promotion opportunities on the basis of ethnic background Experiences of discrimination related with wage disparities general experiences of workplace discrimination	Employment discrimination Wage inequality Workplace culture and discrimination	Qualifications overlooked, ethnic discrimination in job promotions and hiring, preference of non-immigrant employees Unfair wages, wage theft, exploitation due to immigration status, labor rights violations Harassment, assignment of difficult tasks, derogatory remarks, lack of opportunity
3	Experiences of racial profiling and negative stereotyping		Societal bias and law enforcement	Negative stereotyping, bias in media, Islamophobia, government policies leading to stereotyping, racial profiling by police, unwarranted stops and searches
4	Experiences of housing discrimination	General experiences of housing discrimination Landlords charging immigrants disproportionately higher rent charges or neglecting maintenance experiences of harassment, humiliation, and unfair treatment from landlords and neighbors	Housing access and discrimination Housing quality and fairness Neighbor and landlord relations	Denial of housing based on ethnicity, landlords' negative attitudes towards immigrants Overcharging rent, neglecting maintenance, exploitation by landlords Harassment and racism from neighbors, differential treatment by landlords, cultural insensitivity

No.	Themes	Subthemes	Categories	Codes
5	Culture and language barriers make immigrants vulnerable to human rights violations	Language barriers make immigrants vulnerable to human rights violations	Language and cultural integration	Isolation due to language barriers, misunderstandings due to cultural differences, lack of fluency in English, difficulty accessing services
		Cultural differences between immigrants and residents promote human rights violations	Cultural awareness and integration	Lack of cultural awareness, barriers to help-seeking, misunderstandings
		Need for improved access to English language learning programs	Language education accessibility	Importance of English proficiency, lack of affordable language classes
		The need for cultural sensitivity training to combat negative stereotypes against immigrants	Cultural sensitivity training	Importance of cultural sensitivity training for police, landlords, and service providers, reduction of stereotypes through education
6	Legal system complexity and legal immigrants' lack of awareness on how to navigate the complex legal environment	Lack of knowledge and awareness on how to navigate the complex legal environment	Legal system navigation	Complex legal system, systemic challenges, confusion over immigration paperwork, policy changes creating uncertainty
7	Fear of reporting abuses & violations	Immigrants experience fear of being deported if they report human rights violations	Fear of deportation	Fear of deportation, impact on reporting abuses, silence due to fear of status scrutiny
		Fear of retaliation from human rights violation perpetrators	Fear of retaliation	Fear of retaliation, hesitation to report violations, concerns about being believed

The collected data were analyzed using inductive thematic analysis (see Braun and Clarke, 2006). The analysis was conducted in six phases: (a) familiarization with the data, (b) generating initial codes, (c) searching for themes, (d) reviewing themes, (e) defining and naming themes, and (f) writing or producing the report (Nowell et al., 2017). Inductive thematic analysis was suitable for the study because it allowed for an examination of the different participants' perspectives, highlighting similarities and differences in their experiences of human rights violations, and generating unanticipated

insights (see Braun & Clarke, 2006; King, 2004). It was instrumental in summarizing key features of the collected data, providing a structured approach to handling data, and producing a clear and organized final report on the vulnerabilities of legal immigrants and the violation of their human rights in Minnesota (see Nowell et al., 2017). The software used in analyzing the collected data was ATLAS.ti, a computer-assisted qualitative analysis software. ATLAS.ti aided in tracking search terms and keywords and assisted in finding quotations related to specific codes, which were used in writing up the report of the collected data (see Smit & Scherman, 2021). Furthermore, ATLAS.ti's capability for hyperlinking quotations was beneficial for building possible arguments across the data.

Issues of Trustworthiness

Credibility

Upon completion of my proposal, I sought approval from my committee chair and IRB to ensure I could proceed to the data collection phase prior to engaging any participants for individual interviews or focus group discussions. As a purposive sample, each participant in the focus groups and individual interviews met the criteria to participate in the research. Individual interviews were conducted with carefully selected human rights experts and immigration advocates, who were familiar with the treatment of legal immigrants in Minnesota, and the human rights challenges they faced. Focus group discussions were conducted among five individuals selected from each of the study samples (Mexicans, Somalis, and Hmongs) to explore their lived experiences of human rights violations as legal immigrants in Minnesota.

Data saturation was applied to determine the sufficiency of data from the research to foster a robust and valid understanding of the phenomenon under study. Hennick and Kaiser (2020) noted that saturation is usually incorporated into criteria to analyze the quality of qualitative research. Saturation had been applied outside the realm of the grounded theory method to rationalize sample sizes for qualitative research (see Hennick & Kaiser, 2020). To build credibility, I maintained contact with each participant and completed member checks to ensure their portion was believable and accurate. Member checks allowed the participants to review a summary of their interview, granting them the opportunity to make comments or corrections (see Sundler et al., 2019).

Transferability

According to Moon et al. (2016), transferability relates to the extent to which the results and recommendations of a particular research could be applied, with confidence, to a different location with a similar phenomenon or a wider population. Although this research was conducted in Minnesota, human rights violations against legal immigrants were phenomena that were eminent across the United States and in other countries. The findings described in this study could be used in advancing further studies in the field of human rights and the treatment of immigrants. The purpose of this study was to use the knowledge gained from participants' responses through individual interviews and focus group discussions to provide information that might contribute to policy reform considerations to improve the treatment of immigrants in host countries, by exploring how legal immigrants of Mexican, Somali, and Hmong descent experienced human rights violations in Minnesota.

Dependability (Reliability)

Dependability entails the consistency and reliability of the research findings and the extent to which research procedures are documented, such that someone outside the research is able to follow, critique, and audit the research process (Polit et al., 2006).

After coding the data, the process of how each theme was created using the grouped codes was demonstrated. By recording individual interviews and the focus group discussions, presenting a concept cloud with different codes, and a demonstration of how themes were derived from grouped codes, the study demonstrated dependability. With coding from the responses of the study participants, the dissertation committee reviewed the results and provided guidance on any issues that might have reduced dependability.

Confirmability

Ravitch and Carl (2016) opined that confirmability focuses on whether the findings of a qualitative research can be confirmed. Confirmability accentuates that the interpretations of an investigation should be rooted in the data and articulated in approaches consistent with accessible data (Schwandt & Halpern, 1988). In qualitative research, confirmability is likened to objectivity and reliability, which is the methods and assessment of the precision of the truthfulness and the significance being conveyed in the study. Confirmability helps to comprehend a phenomenon from the perspective of the participant, and to understand the significance that research participants give to their experiences (Given, 2008).

Moon et al. (2016) underscored that reporting on researcher predisposition, beliefs, and assumptions is a major criterion of confirmability. To determine

confirmability in the qualitative study, reflexivity was the instrument I used to meet such a goal. I kept a record of a reflexivity journal, which contained a self-assessment of subjectivity, positionality, preconceptions, personal values, and beliefs to reduce bias when necessary and increase the transparency of the research process (see Moon et al., 2016).

Ethical Procedures

To ensure ethical procedures were followed accordingly, I sought IRB approval for the research including terms of participants' recruitment and data collection. All Walden IRB guidelines for informed consent and confidentiality were followed. The IRB application included participants' recruitment process and participant treatment, the study start and end dates, the study, interview details, the study goal and rationale, a description of the process to recruit participants in terms of the strategies I used to contact them and recruitment contact material, the overall method and research plan in terms of data collection and timeline, the benefits of the study, research data security and storage in terms of confidentiality and agreement protocol, the timeframe for data storage (a minimum of 3 years), research data storage procedures and consent procedures, the coding strategy, participants screening or recruiting strategy, the interviewing process in terms of the length of time for the interviews, compensation to the participants, the study population in terms of participant demographics, the number of participants, and any possible conflict of interest which was nonexistent in this study.

Participants were assured that all information collected in the study would be held with utmost confidentiality. All the debriefing forms and questionnaires were included in

the IRB application. I did not foresee any recruitment material concerns. I made certain that all data materials and participant contact procedures were kept private and confidential. Any printed document relative to participants and data collection was locked in a file cabinet within my desk or saved in an encrypted folder online, and I was the only one with access to the file cabinet or folder.

Summary and Transition

The purpose of this study was to use the knowledge gained from participants' responses through individual interviews and focus group discussions to provide information that might contribute to policy reform considerations aimed at improving the treatment of legal immigrants. This exploration focused on how legal immigrants of Mexican, Somali, and Hmong descent experienced human rights violations in Minnesota. The methodology and methods for this qualitative phenomenological study were highlighted in this chapter. I presented detailed strategies for implementing the study, including my roles as the instrument for gathering, analyzing, and interpreting the collected data. In this chapter, I also emphasized the importance of implementing a qualitative phenomenological study that demonstrated ethical principles.

Substantial attention was given to participants to ensure they were respected and treated fairly as I carefully and methodologically gathered data with rigor and validity to maintain transparency. Issues of trustworthiness, credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability of the study were addressed.

Finally, I touched upon the IRB process, outlining how a request had been made and how I followed the IRB guidelines to implement the study. Chapter 4 presents the

study findings, including characteristics of the participants, analysis of the collected data, and the results of the study.

Chapter 4: Results

Introduction

The purpose of this study was to use the knowledge gained from participants' responses through individual interviews and focus group discussions to provide information that may contribute to policy reforms considerations to improve the treatment of legal immigrants, by exploring how legal immigrants of Mexican, Somali, and Hmong descents experiences human rights violations in Minnesota. The research question for this study was as follows: How do legal immigrants of Mexican, Somali, and Hmong descent experience human rights violations in Minnesota as a vulnerable population? By engaging in individual interviews and focus group discussions, this research was driven by the aspiration to capture the depth and nuance of these experiences. Through these rich interactions, participants shared their personal stories, recounting the hardships and injustices they have faced, as well as their strategies for resilience and adaptation as a vulnerable population in Minnesota.

In this chapter, I lay out my research setting and present the demographics and characteristics of the participants relevant to this study. I further describe how data were collected and any challenges encountered during data collection. An overview of data analysis is also discussed, and lastly, the study results are conveyed, including participants' excerpts.

Setting

Data for this study were collected using semistructured interviews with five individual interview participants and 15 focus group discussion participants. The

described methodology for conducting interviews and focus group discussions in different settings, such as public libraries, community meeting rooms, and participants' offices, outlined in Chapter 3 had several implications for the research findings. The use of neutral locations like public libraries and community meeting rooms for the focus group discussions created an environment conducive to open and honest discussions. This neutrality helped minimize biases that could arise from affiliations with specific organizations or institutions. As such, the findings obtained from these discussions had a high chance to reflect genuine perspectives and experiences of the participants regarding human rights violations against legal immigrants in Minnesota.

The choice of interview and focus group locations were based on the preferences of the participants. By accommodating the preferences of participants for individual interview and focus group discussions' locations, I aimed to reduce withdrawal rates and increase participant engagement. Participants' comfort and familiarity with their chosen interview settings facilitated a more candid and detailed responses, thereby enriching the quality of the data collected. While some individual interview participants' offices were not neutral locations due to their affiliation with their respective organizations, the decision to conduct interviews in these settings was made to honor participants' preferences and enhance their comfort. While this constituted the potential risk of biased responses, as participants may feel inhibited or hesitant to discuss sensitive topics related to human rights violations within their workplace environments, one of the two participants who preferred their office space for interview were top executives in their

respective entities. Their comfort and familiarity were instrumental for reducing participants' anxiety, which could adversely affect the quality of data obtained.

The efforts to minimize external noise and distractions in the selected venues, such as study booths in public libraries and private rooms, contributed to creating a conducive atmosphere for a more focused discussion. This enhanced the depth and clarity of the data collected during focus group discussions and individual interviews. The absence of influences from any organizations or institutions on the participants during the study was crucial for maintaining the integrity and credibility of the research findings. It ensures that the data collected remains free from external biases or pressures that could compromise the interpretation of the study results.

Overall, the described data collection procedure in Chapter 3 demonstrated a thoughtful approach to data collection aimed at fostering participant comfort, minimizing biases, and creating an environment conducive to open and honest discussions. Throughout the data collection and analysis process, I remained self-aware and reflective about potential biases that could arise from conducting interviews in participants' offices. I considered how these biases could influence the interpretation of the research findings and took steps to address them in the collection, analysis and reporting of the data. I assured participants that their responses would be kept confidential and anonymized in reporting the research findings. This helped alleviate concerns about potential repercussions for sharing sensitive information within their organization.

Demographics

Twenty participants met the inclusion criteria for this study and consisted of eight females and 12 males. For the individual interviews, the three human rights experts consisted of two males and one female while the two immigration advocates consisted of one male and one female. Of the five individual interview participants, there were two Whites, one Hispanic, one Asian, and one African. The human rights experts had between 12 to 20 years of experience working as human rights activists in Minnesota. The immigration advocates had between 10 to 16 years of experience working with immigrants from different backgrounds including Mexicans, Somalis, and Hmong. For the focus group discussions, the Mexicans consisted of one female and four males; the Somalis consisted of two females and three males; and the Hmong consisted of three females and two males. The focus group participants have lived in Minnesota between 5 to 20 years. Table 2 presents the participants' demographic data.

Table 2*Participants' Demographic Data*

Interviews	Gender	Profession	Yrs. of experience	Age			
1.	Female	Human Rights Expert	20	52			
2.	Male	Human Rights Expert	15	47			
3.	Male	Human Rights Expert	12	56			
4.	Male	Immigration Advocate	16	54			
5.	Female	Immigration Advocate	10	45			
Focus group		Race/ethnicity	Yrs. in MN		Education	Marital status	Family size
6.	Female	Mexican	7	29	Associate degree	No	6
7.	Female	Somali	5	32	Licensed Practical Nurse	Married	5
8.	Male	Mexican	15	50	Associate degree	Married	4
9.	Male	Hmong	20	55	High School diploma	Married	6
10.	Male	Mexican	11	30	Bachelor's degree	No	5
11.	Male	Somali	8	34	Associate degree	Married	6
12.	Male	Hmong	16	46	Master's degree	Married	4
13.	Female	Hmong	13	33	Bachelor's degree	No	7
14.	Male	Somali	7	40	Associate degree	Married	5
15.	Female	Somali	9	39	Registered Nurse	Married	5
16.	Male	Somali	17	42	High School Diploma	Married	7
17.	Female	Hmong	13	36	Associate degree	Married	6
18.	Male	Mexican	17	40	High School diploma	Married	5
19.	Male	Mexican	14	35	High School diploma	Married	6
20.	Female	Hmong	18	47	Associate degree	Married	5

Data Collection

I commenced the data collection process for this study after obtaining approval from Walden's IRB (# 08-04-23-1025435). After making personal contact with each participant, I sent out a recruitment email with the consent document to each participant. After receiving the signed consent forms from participants, I scheduled 45 to 60-minute interviews with three human rights experts and two immigration advocates for a total of five individual interviews. The two individual interview participants who opted for their offices as interview locations made necessary arrangements for a quiet and private space

for the interview. All other individual interviews were held in quiet rooms in different public libraries which were convenient locations for the participants and free from any interruptions. I scheduled 60 to 90 minutes for the focus group discussions with five Mexicans, five Hmong, and five Somali legal immigrants as each group became ready, making a total of 15 focus group discussion participants. All the participants met the inclusion criteria as spelled out in Chapter 3.

All the focus group discussions were held in quiet rooms in different public libraries that were convenient for each group. These rooms were free from interruptions. I conducted individual interviews and focus group discussions in-person at different times, which enabled me to capture nonverbal cues from participants, offering a deeper understanding of their experiences and expressions. Due to technological faults, I recorded all the interviews and focus group discussions using my Samsung phone instead of an audio recording device I had bought for recording. There were no variations during data collection. I transcribed all interviews and focus group discussions using Otter.ai, a software that is used to convert audio to text and corrected various sections of the transcript by listening to the audio recordings and writing out the exact words of the participants. To conceal the identity of participants, I removed all identifying information from the transcripts prior to member checking. I shared the transcripts of individual interviews with each interviewee and shared a summary of the focus group discussions with the focus group participants. All participants confirmed that the transcripts were accurate. The interviews, participant information, and all data were stored in a password-protected folder on a password-protected computer, which only I have access to, where it

will remain for 5 years and then will be destroyed. I then proceeded with data analysis using ATLAS.ti.

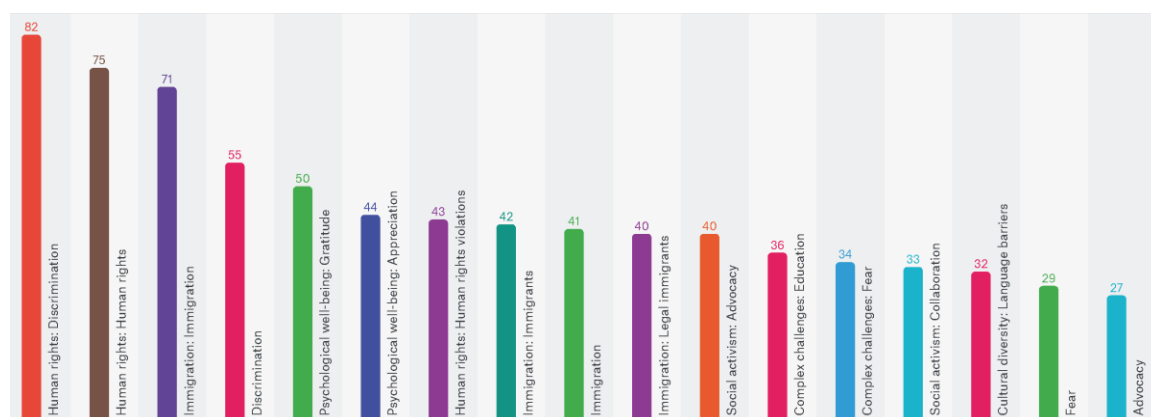
Data Analysis

The data analysis method was qualitative thematic analysis, which was conducted using Atlas.ti software. I chose Atlas.ti because of the ease with identifying codes and analyzing the data in a visually more organized manner. I reviewed each transcript several times before coding. I analyzed each sentence from the interviews and focus group discussions and highlighted key words with line-by-line coding, as described by Charmaz (2006). As I coded the data, rather than using predeveloped codes, I selected different colors to associate with the individual code categories (see Figures 1 and 2). The seven main themes that emerged from the code categories were experiences of educational discrimination, experiences of workplace discrimination, experiences of racial profiling and negative stereotyping, experiences of housing discrimination, cultural and language barriers make immigrants vulnerable to human rights violations, legal system complexity and lack of awareness on how to navigate the legal environment on the part of legal immigrants, and the fear of reporting abuse and violations.

Overview of Findings From Individual Interviews

Figure 1

An Overview of Findings From the Individual Interviews



Individual interviews were guided by 10 semistructured questions examining the experiences of Mexican, Somali, and Hmong immigrants in Minnesota. Several common human rights violations and challenges emerged. In this section, only a summary of the key results obtained is shown. A more detailed presentation of the results obtained is reserved for the results section. Firstly, language barriers posed a significant obstacle for these communities, limiting their access to vital services, employment opportunities, and social integration. Discrimination and prejudice based on ethnicity or nationality were also prevalent, leading to unequal treatment and hindrances in areas like housing, education, and healthcare. Additionally, economic disparities and restricted job prospects often left these communities vulnerable to labor rights abuses and exploitation. These common challenges encapsulated the broader human rights violations experienced by Mexican, Somali, and Hmong immigrants in Minnesota. Legal immigrants of Mexican, Somali, and Hmong descent in Minnesota faced challenges such as discrimination in

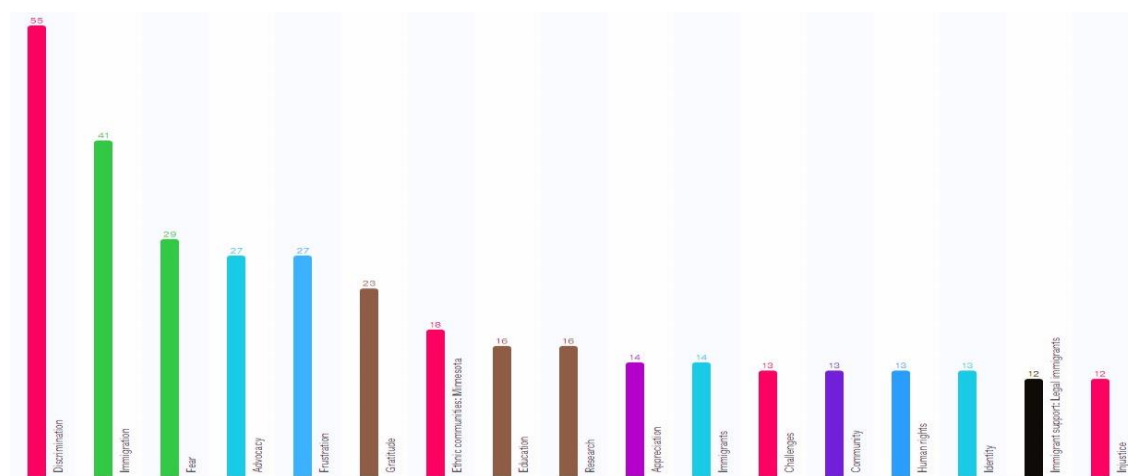
employment, housing, and education, language barriers, and sometimes mistreatment by law enforcement.

Collaboration between different stakeholders was crucial to address the specific needs and concerns of these immigrant groups effectively. Initiatives that helped address these issues included cultural sensitivity training programs, community advocacy networks, community-based programs providing legal support and resources, and the Minnesota Welcoming Cities initiative promoting inclusivity and protecting the rights of immigrants.

Overview of Findings From Focus Group Discussions

Figure 2

An Overview of Perceptions From Focus Group Discussions



The focus group discussions were guided by eight semistructured questions, which revealed that legal immigrants in Minnesota faced challenges in accessing resources and reporting human rights violations. This section only provides a summary of

the key results obtained in the focus group discussions. A more detailed presentation of the results is provided in the results section. Focus group participants reported concerns about the response from authorities and the potential retaliation they would face if they reported these human rights violations. Participants noted that improved support systems, resources, and policy changes were needed to address these challenges.

Legal immigrants reported facing discrimination, wage theft, housing discrimination, harassment, workplace discrimination, profiling, and lack of support from law enforcement. They believed that English language programs, access to legal rights information, family reunification, policies that prioritized keeping families together, and media campaigns promoting inclusivity could help improve the situation.

They believed that changes in policies made it harder for legal immigrants to access benefits and services. They faced challenges with visa wait times, family reunification, and cultural differences in medical practices and social services. Discrimination, exploitation, and fear of reporting violations due to possible retaliation or deportation were common.

Participants also believed that legal immigrants need equal treatment, access to healthcare, affordable housing, education, and protection from discrimination. They emphasized community support, education, transparency, and resources to navigate systems effectively. The emotional and psychological impact of these challenges were reported to be significant.

Participants highlighted that legal immigrants in Minnesota had contrasting experiences when it came to feeling respected and valued. Language barriers and a lack

of cultural sensitivity could create difficulties. Participants believed that education, community outreach, cultural sensitivity training, and better access to interpreters and information in multiple languages could help improve the treatment of legal immigrants. According to participant responses, reporting human rights violations was challenging due to fear, concerns about authorities, and uncertainty about effectiveness. They opined that support, education, and resources were important to empower immigrants and address these barriers. Participants expressed their desires for understanding, engagement, and support from policymakers and elected officials.

During the data analysis process, seven main themes emerged among participants, with numerous subthemes, categories, and codes, as shown in Table 1. These themes, subthemes, categories, and codes are discussed in detail in the results section of this chapter.

Evidence of Trustworthiness

Cohen and Morrison (2017) opined that it is essential to verify the research design from the start to ensure credibility. My role as the researcher in this study entailed designing the interview protocol, recruiting participants, collecting data, analyzing and presenting the data, as well as interpreting participants' responses correctly to make factual findings. To ensure that the study's conclusions and findings are reliable and valid, I described my steps to ensure credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability of this study in Chapter 3. The elements identified above were addressed to ensure trustworthiness of the study.

Credibility

According to Mirriam and Tisdell (2016), credibility refers to how well the research findings match reality. To ensure credibility, I made sure that all research participants met the criteria for the study. I made contact with all participants via email to confirm their willingness, consent and the freewill to participate in the study. After obtaining confirmation from participants, I proceeded to scheduled individual interviews and focus group discussions according to the availability and convenience of participants. All five interviews and three focus group discussions were conducted in person in different quiet and safe location and were recorded using my phone. I also recorded body languages in my personal journal to capture nonverbal cues. I transcribed the interviews and focus group discussions and included the nonverbal expressions. I then conducted member checking whereby individual interview participants received transcripts of the raw data, while focus group discussion participants received a summary of the discussions to review for accuracy. I started analyzing the data after I received approval of the transcripts and summaries from all participants.

Transferability

Research is said to meet transferability criteria when the same study can be applied to other individuals and settings (Rudestam & Newton, 2007). I described how the participants were recruited in line with the inclusion and exclusion criteria, up to the scheduling of the interviews and focus group discussions. I also provided individual interview questions, as well as focus group discussions guides, which were all aligned to the research question. After completing the interviews and focus group discussions, I

purchased and used ATLAS.ti 23 data analysis software to code and categorize the transcribed data using quotes from participants to support the themes that emerged from the individual interviews and focus group discussions. I employed thick descriptions to describe the setting, participants, data collection, and analysis procedures.

Thick description in qualitative analysis refers to the detailed account of field experiences in which the researcher makes explicit the patterns of cultural and social relationships and puts them in context (Geertz, 1973). This method allowed detailed themes to emerge from the data, which supports the element of transferability in the study. According to Houghton et al. (2012), thick description allows the reader to determine a degree of transferability based on details obtained by the researcher. However, due to the small and deliberately chosen sample size, this research is not transferrable. Participants in this study were selected based on their unique experiences (focus group participants) and expertise (individual interview participants) regarding human rights violations against legal immigrants in Minnesota. The unique characteristics and experiences of participants regarding human rights violations against legal immigrants imply the conclusions drawn from this study may only be applicable within the specific context in which the study was conducted.

Dependability

The methodology I used to conduct this study ensured that the study's findings are accurate, consistent, and can be replicated (see Johnson et al., 2020). Triangulation was used to corroborate the findings, which helped in validating the interpretation of participants' lived experiences by cross-verifying data collected through individual

interviews and focus group discussions (see Denzin & Lincoln, 2013). Using methodological triangulation, this study met the dependability criteria. I recorded individual interviews and focus group discussions and demonstrated how themes were derived from grouped codes. The data were also verified by the participants through member checking. I described in detail how the data were collected, and how the codes, categories, and themes were formed, using ATLAS.ti. data analysis software. I made constant reference to the collected data throughout the data analysis process, which helped me to reduce my biases and assumptions as an immigrant living in Minnesota. During the interview process, I strictly adhered to the semistructured interview protocol developed based on the research questions and literature. Adhering to this guide ensured consistency across interviews and focus group discussions was maintained. This approach reduced the likelihood of interview questions being influenced by my own personal biases as the researcher.

Confirmability

According to Ravitch and Carl (2016), confirmability focuses on whether the findings of qualitative research can be confirmed. Given (2008) opined that confirmability helps to comprehend a phenomenon from the perspective of the participant and to understand the significance that research participants give to their experiences. I used reflexivity, which helped me reflect on my personal beliefs about the topic and the influence that I have on the study. I reflected on how the process of research affects me as a researcher. I analyzed my personal assumptions and biases that I may have towards the topic as I examined how legal immigrants experience human rights violations in

Minnesota. Confirmability was strengthened with member checking of the individual interviews and focus group discussions.

Results

In this qualitative phenomenological study, I purposed to provide information that may contribute to policy reform considerations to improve the treatment of legal immigrants by using the knowledge gained from participants' responses through individual interviews and focus group discussions, exploring how legal immigrants of Mexican, Somali, and Hmong descents experience human rights violations in Minnesota. The conducted data analysis generated seven core themes and numerous subthemes based on the research question: How do legal immigrants of Mexican, Somali, and Hmong descent experience human rights violations in Minnesota as a vulnerable population?

Theme 1: Experiences of Educational Discrimination

Following the analysis of interviews and focus group discussions data, one recurrent theme emerged: the experiences of educational discrimination among legal immigrants of the Hmong, Mexican, and Somali descent. This theme captured the unique experiences that legal immigrants and their children face when attempting to pursue their educational and career goals in Minnesota. According to Berkel et al. (2010), discrimination is considered a key stressor for minority populations in Minnesota, which contributes to persistent disparities across other important aspects of their daily life. This theme emerged prominently from the collected data, highlighting critical challenges faced by legal immigrants of Mexican, Somali, and Hmong descent in Minnesota. Supported by insights from both individual interviews and focus group discussions, the

theme provided a comprehensive understanding of the barriers to education and the consequent impacts on the affected individuals. This first theme was supported by participants from both the individual interviews and the focused group discussions. All five participants from the individual interviews and one participant from the focus group contributed to this theme. As per the findings of this first theme, educational discrimination experienced by legal immigrants of Hmong, Somali, and Mexican descent had two major dimensions: (a) difficulty accessing quality education and (b) harassment and bullying of legal immigrants' children in school. Each of these dimensions has been discussed in greater detail below.

Difficulty Accessing Quality Education

Grunewald and Nath (2019) indicated that inequitable access to high-quality K-12 education in Minnesota has resulted in some of the state's largest gaps in educational outcomes by race, ethnicity, and immigration status. White students in Minnesota have higher average standardized test scores and graduation rates than children of color and Black children, with those from immigrant families facing the brunt. The unanimous view among the five individual interview participants and one focus group member of this study underscored a systemic issue in the Minnesota educational landscape. Legal immigrants and their children, particularly from Somali, Hmong, and Mexican backgrounds, confront substantial hurdles in accessing quality education, a right that is universally recognized as fundamental. Low levels of formal education and LEP poses barriers to the integration of immigrant parents making it challenging for them to support their children's educational success (Chambers, 2017). English proficiency is an

important marker of immigrants' integration and a significant component of their capacity to access higher-wage jobs and support their children's education (Hofstetter & McHugh, 2021).

The findings indicated that a predominant barrier for these communities, particularly the Hmong, is the language barrier. From the individual interviews, P3 stated, "Hmong immigrants often experience barriers to accessing education and healthcare due to language and cultural differences." English, being the primary language of instruction in Minnesota schools, poses a significant hurdle for nonnative speakers. The lack of proficiency in English, coupled with cultural differences, creates an education access gap. This gap not only limits the academic achievements of Mexican, Somali, and Hmong legal immigrants but also hinders their integration into the broader society. According to Bleakley and Chin (2010), limited English language proficiency is a major barrier to effective integration into American society. It impedes access to health care services, schools, and government agencies; relegates workers to low-wage jobs with reduced likelihood of upward mobility; and leads to early school dropout and associated risk behaviors on the part of young people. This finding aligns with broader research indicating that language barriers are a significant impediment to educational attainment for immigrant communities in Minnesota.

P4 also mentioned that legal immigrants encounter challenges accessing education but did not clarify the nature of those hurdles: "Legal immigrants often encounter hurdles in accessing healthcare, education, and legal representation." P2 also held similar views but did not clarify the nature of difficulties that the legal immigrants

face in accessing quality education in Minnesota. P2 noted that immigrants may lack access to affordable healthcare and quality education for their children, which further adds to their vulnerabilities. P2 also stated,

Access to education is another major concern. Many of the children of these immigrants are US citizens, and they face daily challenges due to deportation threats or the fear of being separated from their parents. This affects their academic performance, and I've seen some children struggle with school as a result.

Harassment and Bullying in School

The second dimension of the theme, concerning harassment and bullying, sheds light on the social challenges faced by the children of legal immigrants in educational settings. H4's account of her daughter's experience with discrimination and its adverse effects on her mental health and academic performance is poignant. H4 stated, "My daughter faced discrimination at school. She was teased for being different, and the school didn't take it seriously. It took a toll on her self-esteem, and she struggled academically." This narrative illustrates the real and often overlooked consequence of bullying based on ethnic differences – a decline in self-esteem and academic achievement.

In Minnesota, Latino students have been taunted with "build a wall" and "go back to Mexico" chants, while Asians have been harassed for spreading the Corona virus (Wasem, 2020). Islamophobia has been on the rise as well across Minnesota with Somalis facing the brunt of it at schools, workplaces, and shopping centers. P5 stated,

“As for Hmong immigrants, there have been cases of educational discrimination. Their children sometimes face bullying and discrimination in schools, which can have long-lasting effects on their academic and emotional well-being.” P5's remarks further corroborate the existence of bullying and discrimination, particularly against children from the Hmong community. The emphasis on the long-lasting impact of such experiences on academic and emotional well-being is critical, pointing to the need for systemic changes in school environments.

Theme 2: Experiences of Workplace Discrimination

The findings from this study, comprising interviews and focus group discussions with immigrants in Minnesota, revealed significant insights into the experiences of workplace discrimination. My interpretation of these findings is focused on three identified subthemes: denial of employment or promotion opportunities based on ethnic background, general experiences of workplace discrimination, discrimination relating to wage disparities, and experiences of being denied employment or promotion opportunities on the basis of ethnic background.

The study vividly illustrates how ethnic background plays a crucial role in employment and promotion opportunities for immigrants in Minnesota. Participants across different ethnic groups—Hmong, Mexican, and Somali—consistently reported experiences where their qualifications were overshadowed by their ethnic identities. Discrimination based on people's origin remains a major challenge for legal immigrants to gain access to meaningful employment in Minnesota. Because their foreign earned educational degrees, licenses and credentials are not usually recognized by professional

organizations and employers in the United States, some high skilled legal immigrants who received their training abroad are underemployed in Minnesota due to lack of options for meaningful employment (Tsuchiya et al., 2021).

Particularly to Mexican immigrants, participant M3 explain how frustrating it is being an immigrant: “I feel like some employers prefer not to hire immigrants,” hence the difficulties securing meaningful employment. Representing the Somalis, participants S1, S2, and S4 agreed that being denied employment and promotion opportunities was tied to them being Somalis. For instance, S1 reported that although her friend was qualified for a particular job, being of a Somali descent cost him the job. S1 stated,

One incident that stands out is when my friend was denied a job opportunity solely because of his Somali background. He was qualified and had a great resume, but the employer flat-out told him they didn't want any Somalis working there. It affected his self-esteem and made him feel unwelcome in this community.

S2 concurred with the responses of S1, noting that although the state of Minnesota was agreeable and accepting to immigrants, there were instances of discrimination. While narrating her experiences, S4 reported experiences of discrimination when searching for employment. S4 shared, “Personally, I've faced discrimination while job hunting. My qualifications were often dismissed because of my name, and I received fewer callbacks than my non-Somali counterparts”. S4 further stated, “I've encountered workplace discrimination too, where I feel like I'm not given the same opportunities as my American-born colleagues”.

The responses in the focus group discussions were reiterated by the responses of individual interviews. P1 explained that compared to other ethnic minorities in Minnesota, the Somali immigrants experienced numerous forms of discrimination as a result of their names or religious clothes. P1 stated, “The Somali immigrants, they often experience discrimination in various forms. Some face barriers in employment opportunities due to their names or religious attire.” Similar responses were given by P4 who stated, “Somali immigrants may face discrimination due to their religion, language, and culture, and they've also experienced challenges related to counterterrorism policies.”

P3, while agreeing to instances of discrimination in employment and promotion opportunities, explained that it was important to ensure the rights of legal immigrants were upheld through increased awareness and community education. P3 stated that “it's essential for us to raise awareness about these violations and work towards policy changes and community education to ensure that legal immigrants from these backgrounds are treated fairly and afforded the human rights and dignity they deserve.” Overall, participants included in this study both in the focus group and interviews agreed that although legal immigrants enjoyed similar rights to other Americans, instances of discrimination during job hunting and being bypassed when it was time for promotion were a common phenomenon.

The existence of “at will” employment in Minnesota leaves the discretion to hire using both economically relevant considerations such as the applicant’s skills, and irrelevant or illegal considerations like applicant’s race or ethnicity, is entirely the employer’s choice (Chambers, 2017). This has entrenched hiring discrimination in

Minnesota, despite legal prohibitions. While the 2019 unemployment rate for U.S.-born workers with a high school degree or less was 4.9%, Black and Latino/a workers in Minnesota with the same education had unemployment rates of 8.2% (Burr et al., 2010). The recurrence of such experiences suggests a systemic issue where ethnic background is a determinant in professional advancement, regardless of an individual's qualifications or legal status.

Experiences of Discrimination Related With Wage Disparities

Clark et al. (2020) opined that most legal immigrants primarily work in a labor force division that does not provide living wages, benefits, or job security. This leads to financial difficulties, which exposes immigrant families to risks of poor health and relationship violence (van Gelder et al., 2020; Yoshikawa et al., 2020). Wage disparities based on ethnicity was another significant concern raised by the participants. As illustrated by H1's account, "My husband, who works in construction, was once denied fair wages by his employer because he knew they thought he couldn't complain due to our immigrant status," there is an exploitative dimension to this discrimination. It not only affects the economic well-being of individuals but also reflects a broader societal issue where immigrant status is used as leverage for unfair labor practices. Gentsch and Mashev (2011) noted that documented individuals who have legal rights to work continue to encounter injustices, which prevents them from advancing to a better economic situation.

P3 from the individual interviews contended that for being immigrants, "They may face wage theft or workplace exploitation due to their immigration status." In the

focus group with the Mexicans, M4 reiterated the responses provided by the H1 stating, “Even when you get the job, you're paid less than others doing the same work.” M2 agreed with H1 and M4 stating that

Yes, wage theft is a big problem. Some employers pay us less than what we're owed, but we often don't know how to address it within the legal system...And there have been instances where employers take advantage of our immigration status, paying us less than minimum wage, and not providing safe working conditions.

Corroborating the responses from the focus groups, individual interview participants also reported that legal immigrants experience wage disparities because of their ethnic orientations. For instance, P2 stated that

For legal immigrants, economic factors were crucial as economic disparities contributed to their vulnerability and restrict their access to resources necessary for defending their rights...Many legal immigrants, especially those from these communities, have faced employment discrimination, wage disparities, and limited access to educational opportunities.

P3 contended that for being immigrants, “they may face wage theft or workplace exploitation due to their immigration status.” Reiterating the responses of other participants, P5 explained that the economic wellbeing of Somalis was compromised by wage discrimination which also influenced their ability to access necessities. Verbatim, P5 stated, “In the case of Somali immigrants, there have been instances of employment

discrimination, where they are often paid significantly less than their non-immigrant counterparts for similar work.”

P 5 shared that Mexican immigrants also reported experiencing wage disparities. P5 stated,

For Mexican immigrants, one common issue is labor rights violations, especially in industries like agriculture and construction. These individuals often face substandard working conditions, wage theft, and even discrimination due to their immigration status. On top of that, there can be instances of racial profiling and harassment by law enforcement agencies, which intersect with immigration status issues.

The economic disparities affecting legal immigrants in Minnesota have broader implications for their integration and participation in society. Unfair wages not only affect immigrants’ ability to defend their legal rights but also limits their access to education, healthcare, and housing, which are critical for successful integration (National Immigration Law Center, 2022). Additionally, there is a social impact: when legal immigrants are unable to effectively defend their rights, it can lead to a sense of disenfranchisement and diminish their trust in the legal system, potentially affecting their willingness to engage with law enforcement and other governmental institutions.

General Experiences of Workplace Discrimination

Existing literature has suggested that phenotypically, European immigrants face far less discrimination in workplaces than their counterparts from Asia, Latin America, and Africa (Portes & Rumbaut, 2016). General workplace discrimination, encompassing

various forms of unfair treatment, is a pervasive issue. H2 stated, “I faced discrimination at work too. My boss used to make fun of my accent and assign me more difficult tasks, saying I needed to prove myself. It made me feel small and powerless.” H2’s experience of being assigned more difficult tasks and mocked for their accent is a telling example of the subtler forms of discrimination that contribute to a hostile work environment. The experiences shared by S1 and others highlight the psychological impact of discrimination, where individuals feel the need to report incidents but are often held back by fear of repercussions. P4 stated, “Legal immigrants are sometimes subjected to unfair labor practices, including wage theft, dangerous working conditions, or even harassment. Their fear of retaliation or deportation often prevents them from reporting these abuses.” This underreporting, as noted by P4, is a significant barrier to addressing workplace discrimination, especially for legal immigrants who may fear retaliation or deportation.

Like the Hmong, the Somalis also reported instances of workplace discrimination. S1 stated, “Well, I haven't faced any major violations, but there are instances of discrimination, especially in the workplace. It's subtle, but it's there.” Agreeing with the Hmong regarding the need to stand up for one’s right, S1, although afraid, had to report incidences of discrimination against a coworker, sharing, “Yes, I reported an incident involving a coworker. They were constantly making derogatory remarks about my background. It was tough, but I had to speak up.”

Experiences of workplace discrimination were also reported by individual interviews participants. P1 shared that “many Mexican immigrants in Minnesota faced employment discrimination, exploitation, and racial profiling...Many of them are into

low-wage jobs with little job security, which can lead to wage theft, unsafe working conditions, and limited access to healthcare.” Like P1, P2 also shared, “Many Mexican immigrants work in low-paying jobs, often facing wage theft, unsafe working conditions, and unjust firings.” Similar to the Mexicans, P3 shared that “members of the Somali community also reported workplace discrimination where individuals with valid work permits and qualifications have been denied job opportunities solely due to their ethnic background or the way they express their religious beliefs.”

Without mentioning any specific immigrant groups, P4 explained that discrimination at the workplace was concerning as it was often directed towards legal immigrants. In her submissions, P4 stated, “Legal immigrants are sometimes subjected to unfair labor practices, including wage theft, dangerous working conditions, or even harassment. Their fear of retaliation or deportation often prevents them from reporting these abuses.” P4 further stated that “members of legal immigrant communities face systemic biases in employment, housing, and education.” Furthermore, P4 reported, “I have seen cases where legal immigrants are denied job opportunities because of their ethnicity or have difficulties renting homes due to discriminatory practices. Workplace discriminations, not only affect their economic well-being but also their psychological and emotional state.” Therefore, while reporting cases of discrimination has helped legal immigrants, fears of retaliation or deportation have discouraged many from reporting and as a result, perpetrating instances of discrimination in the workplace.

The findings offer a profound understanding of the multifaceted nature of workplace discrimination faced by legal immigrants in Minnesota. The experiences

shared by participants reflect a troubling reality where ethnic background, immigration status, and cultural differences play a significant role in determining employment opportunities, wage equity, and overall treatment in the workplace. These findings call for a critical examination of existing workplace policies, laws, and cultural attitudes towards immigrants. P3 stated that “it's essential for us to raise awareness about these violations and work towards policy changes and community education to ensure that legal immigrants from these backgrounds are treated fairly and afforded the human rights and dignity they deserve.” The findings suggest the need for interventions at both policy and community levels to address these systemic biases and to ensure that the rights and dignity of all legal immigrants are upheld, as advocated by P3. This research underscores the importance of awareness, legal protection, and community support in combating workplace discrimination and fostering a more inclusive and equitable work environment.

Theme 3: Experiences of Racial Profiling and Negative Stereotyping

The data, drawn from both focus group discussions and individual interviews, reveal a pervasive pattern of discrimination and bias faced by legal immigrant communities, predominantly stemming from their racial, ethnic, or religious identities. The study findings highlight the significant impact of racial profiling and negative stereotyping on immigrant communities. Tsuchiya et al. (2021) noted that the implementation of U.S. immigration policies like the Customs and Border Protection policy, the unprecedented increase in federal immigration enforcement policies, detention, and deportation of immigrants without due process increased racial profiling

and denial of due process rights for many legal immigrants in Minnesota. They further explained that this situation continues to impact legal immigrants by limiting their ability to access adequate health care, provide for their families, raise bond fees, and obtain appropriate legal representation (Tsuchiya et al., 2021).

S3 shared, “Yes, and it's not just about individuals. Sometimes, I think the media plays a role in shaping perceptions. We see stories that focus on the negative aspects of our community, which can reinforce stereotypes.” S3 emphasized the role of media in shaping perceptions, indicating that negative portrayals can reinforce stereotypes. This can lead to feelings of alienation and mistrust within these communities. Racial profiling and harassment have a ripple effect on immigrant families, particularly on children. S3 stated, “It's also important for the media to show a more balanced view of our community. Highlight our successes and contributions, not just the negatives.” Although the United States has made progress to alleviate the impacts of bias and negative stereotyping, participant S5 shared the experiences of Somalis: “I remember the aftermath of the police shooting of a Somali man in our community a few years ago. It was heartbreaking to see the injustices play out.”

The study findings also underscored the challenges faced by legal immigrants, including discrimination, harassment, and violations of their rights. From the individual interviews, P1 pointed out incidents of discrimination and harassment faced by Somali immigrants, especially related to religion, such as wearing a hijab. P1 stated,

Legal immigrants who practice Islam often face discrimination and harassment... There have been incidents in which they've been verbally abused or

even physically attacked due to their religious attire, like wearing a hijab. It's a clear violation of their right to practice their religion without fear

I represented a family who had their car vandalized with hateful slurs and their children were bullied at school because of their religion. It was heartbreaking to see the children's fear and the family's struggle to feel safe in their own community

P2 reiterated that

Many Somali legal immigrants have faced discrimination in employment and housing, often due to their religion or ethnicity. They may encounter xenophobia, Islamophobia, or be subjected to racial profiling. These human rights violations affect their ability to live, work, and integrate into society as full and equal members.

These experiences are not only emotionally distressing but also impede their ability to live, work, and integrate into society.

Racial Profiling and Harassment Especially Within the Policing Context

The study findings revealed strained police-community relations due to racial profiling. Participants from both the Somali and Mexican communities reported instances of being racially profiled by the police, which eroded their trust in law enforcement. Discrimination and racial profiling not only affect daily routines but also erode trust in public institutions and can hinder effective community policing efforts. The experiences of racial profiling, discrimination, and negative stereotyping impact the overall well-being of immigrant communities. S3 mentioned that profiling and excessive use of force

against Somali youth create a sense of injustice and mistrust towards law enforcement, affecting their well-being and future prospects.

For instance, within the Mexican focus group, M2 remembered some encounters with the police that were frustrating, stating, “Yes, I've had a few encounters with the police that left me feeling targeted. Once, I was pulled over for a minor traffic violation, and they asked about my immigration status instead of just giving me a ticket.” M5 also reported instances of being racially profiled by the police, stating: “I faced racial profiling by the police, even though I'm a legal resident. They pulled me over without reason and questioned my status, making me feel like a criminal.” M5 stressed that “being racially profiled by the police was a humiliating experience. It made me question my place in this society.”

Although M1 had no personal experiences of racial profiling and harassment, he reported the stories of some of his friends who had been harassed by the police; in his submission, M1 stated, “Well, I've heard stories of racial profiling by law enforcement. Some of my friends have been pulled over just because they look Hispanic, even though they're here legally.” Corroborative responses were reported by M3, who reported experiences with the police, stating, “Yes, I reported a case of racial profiling. The police just brushed it off like it wasn't a big deal. They didn't take me seriously.”

Similar to the Mexicans, the Somalis in their focus group also reported being harassed and racially profiled by the police. For instance, participant S2 recounted that law enforcement officers had intimidated and racially profiled him on several occasions,

something that made him feel alienated from the community. Similar responses were reported by S3 who stated,

I've seen cases of police profiling and excessive use of force against Somali youth in our neighborhood. Young people here often feel targeted, which creates a sense of injustice and mistrust towards law enforcement. This affects their overall well-being and future prospects.

The participant further stated that racial profiling did not only apply to individual harassment but also the failure of law enforcement officers to take action against people who discriminate against immigrants. As per P3, police officers failed to take action when cases of harassment were reported: "I did once, but it didn't go well. I reported an incident of racial profiling, and the police officer brushed it off."

Besides the responses from the Mexican and Somali focus groups, I also noted that individuals interview participants also reported witnessing immigrants being harassed. P1 stated that "Mexican immigrants have reported experiences of, employment discrimination, racial profiling, and sometimes, inhumane treatment by law enforcement." In addition to discriminations, P1 stated,

And there was a case where a Mexican immigrant was unjustly detained by law enforcement due to racial profiling, causing him to be separated from his family for weeks, even though he had legal status. These experiences leave lasting emotional scars and erode trust in the system.

Similarly, the Somali focus group reported that some of their legal rights were, sometimes violated during security checks at airports, adding to their discomfort. The

outcome of discrimination and racial profiling were associated with immense stress and fear within their families, which can manifest in various ways, including children performing poorly in school as well as affects their access to healthcare, as many are reluctant to seek medical attention due to their immigration status.

Incidences of racial profiling, discrimination, and harassment from and by the police instilled fear among immigrants. P2 from the individual interview stated, “Legal immigrants in these communities are often afraid to step out of their homes, fearing racial profiling, harassment, or unjust deportation.” Consistent responses were reported by P3 who stated that members of the legal immigrants reported, cases of racial profiling and harassment by law enforcement, which infringe on their rights to security and freedom from discrimination. Reporting on the experiences of members of the Mexican community, P3 observed, incidents of racial profiling and unwarranted stops by law enforcement, even when individuals have the appropriate documentation which often resulted in emotional distress and, in some cases, unjust deportation proceedings.

Among the Somali immigrants, S3 stated, “We often face profiling, discrimination, and invasive surveillance, particularly after the rise in anti-Muslim sentiment.” According to S3, discriminatory practices and racial profiling, “result in a loss of privacy, restrictions on their freedom of movement, and a general feeling of alienation.” From the individual interviews, P5 acknowledged the issue of discrimination and racial profiling experienced by immigrants in Minnesota. P5 stated, “Legal immigrants from these communities often face racial profiling, which affects their interactions with law enforcement and the community... they are often subjected to

unwarranted stops, searches, and questioning, leading to feelings of insecurity and marginalization.” Agreeing with other participants, P5 reported that “discrimination and racial profiling, not only impacts their daily routines but also their trust in public institutions.” As per the provided responses, there is a general agreement among the study participants that racial profiling, harassment, and bias is common among legal immigrants of Somali, Mexican and Hmong communities.

Theme 4 - Experiences of Housing Discrimination

According to Dion (2001), in the early 2000s, Somali Americans reported higher levels of perceived housing discrimination compared to other immigrants in the United States. Responses from participants highlighted that legal immigrants of Hmong, Mexican, and Somali communities, commonly face discrimination when seeking housing due to their ethnicity and immigrant status. This discrimination manifests in various ways, including being denied housing or facing excessive questioning about legal status when applying for rental housing. All five Somali participants reported having general experiences of housing discrimination such as being denied housing once because of their ethnicity. This shows higher levels of perceived housing discrimination compared to other immigrants in the United States as some landlords did not want to rent to Somali immigrants. The findings indicate that Somali participants experienced housing discrimination as a result of their immigration status.

As reported by the individual interview participants, one of the major housing challenges in the Mexican immigrant community is the lack of affordable housing, as many Mexican immigrants often reside in housing units with many health and quality

hazards, including lead paint and roach infestations. Individual interview participants perceived that for many Mexican immigrants, because they lack credit history, finding a co-signer is almost impossible when trying to buy a home. Some individual interview participants also reported that Mexican immigrants have reported being taken advantage of by the banks due to their lack of knowledge and overcharging those closing fees. Three subthemes emerged during the thematic analysis of experiences of housing discrimination as discussed below.

General Experiences of Housing Discrimination

Four participants contributed to this theme by demonstrating facing general experiences of housing discrimination as immigrants. Participants reported that they experienced difficulties related to housing, access to healthcare, and social services due to their immigrant status in the community where landlords and other officials denied their housing and social service access rights. From the Hmong focus group, H2 highlighted being denied housing because of ethnicity as Hmong, “I remember being denied housing once because of my ethnicity. That hurt a lot.” Similar to H2, M3 from the Mexican focus group indicated having experienced housing discrimination in the form of being asked questions about legal status, to find a reason not to rent to a Mexican. According to M3, multiple questions upon the application for rental housing were meant to deny immigrant houses, thus contributing to housing discrimination. M3 stated, “I once applied for a housing rental, and they asked me so many questions about my legal status that I felt like they were trying to find a reason not to rent to me.” These findings underscored the need for increased awareness and training among landlords and property management

professionals about fair housing practices. The findings also demonstrate the emotional toll such discrimination takes on legal immigrants.

From the Somali focus group, S3 faced some housing discrimination issues upon moving to the United States including difficulty finding a place to rent because some landlords denied to rent to Somali immigrants due to these landlord's negative attitudes towards immigrants. Housing discrimination led to a lack of good housing among immigrants such as Somalis, Mexicans, and Hmong. Despite increased housing discrimination, S4 reported the landlord who denied renting the house to a Somali immigrant. Although it took a long time to get help, eventually the housing rights organization helped in accessing the house, S4 recounted, "Yes, I reported a landlord who refused to fix a leaky roof in winter. It took a while, but eventually, a housing rights organization helped me." Regarding difficulties faced in accessing housing and healthcare services, individual interview P1 revealed that the majority of Somali immigrants faced challenges and difficulties related to housing, access to healthcare, and accessing social services: "This (Somali) group also grapples with difficulties related to housing, access to healthcare, and social services."

The study also revealed that some landlords exploit immigrants by charging higher rental fees or neglecting maintenance in their housing units. M1 stated, "Landlords do not care about the welfare of the immigrants thus they expose them to many dangers including insecure houses without maintenance as well as charging them higher rental fees." This confirms Tsuchiya et al. (2021), who reported that apart from the income disadvantage due to factors such as language proficiency, Somali, Hmong, and Mexican

immigrants also experience issues of discriminatory practices from landlords, high unaffordable rents, substandard living conditions, and long waiting lists for subsidized housing, which affect their ability to afford a decent lifestyle in Minnesota. This economic exploitation, coupled with the fear of retaliation, creates a challenging living environment for immigrants. This calls for stricter enforcement of housing regulations and protections for immigrants. Legislative action and oversight may be necessary to ensure fair treatment and affordable housing options for legal immigrants.

Landlords Charging Immigrants Disproportionately Higher Rent Charges or Neglecting Maintenance

Five participants contributed to this subtheme. The participant posited that housing discrimination was exhibited through landlord charging immigrants disproportionately higher rent charges or neglecting the maintenance of houses. Participants highlighted that due to racial discrimination attitudes among landlords, they charge higher rental charges for immigrants making it difficult to afford houses despite standard and affordable house rent charges being charged to other tenants. Some of the housing discrimination as reported by participants includes higher rental charges, and neglect in the maintenance of the house despite complaints. From the Mexican focus group, M4 reported that some landlords discriminate against immigrants by charging higher rental fees and refusing to maintain once notified of defects in the house, making it hard for the immigrant to live in such houses. M4 stated, “I’ve seen how some landlords discriminate against immigrants. They charge higher rent or neglect maintenance, and they don’t care because they think we won’t complain.”

Landlords take advantage of immigrants to overcharge them with high rent and neglect to fix their apartment with blackmail of reporting them to the authorities making it difficult for the immigrants to confront them or report them to housing rights organizations, as reported by M1 from the Mexican focus group discussion. According to M1, landlords do not care about the welfare of the immigrants thus they expose them to many dangers including insecure houses without maintenance as well as charging them higher rental fees, which makes their lives unbearable. It is difficult for immigrants to assert their rights because of fear of retaliation and even eviction from the house. M1 shared, “Well, sometimes landlords take advantage of us by not maintaining our housing properly. It's difficult to assert our rights because of fear of retaliation or eviction.”

M5 reported that landlords were overcharging for rent and refusing to fix things in the apartment based on the immigrant status of the tenant, resulting in significant housing discrimination. M5 shared, “I reported a landlord who was overcharging me for rent and refusing to fix things in my apartment. They just told me to find a new place if I didn't like it. It was infuriating.” H4 from the Hmong focus group also reported having faced discrimination in housing whereby landlords sometimes charge higher rents or make it difficult for immigrants to rent; despite having good credit and legal status. H4 stated,

It becomes frustrating for immigrants to face housing discrimination at the hands of landlords despite having good credit scores and legal status just because they are of different race and origin... My family and I have faced some discrimination in housing. Landlords sometimes charge higher rents or make it difficult for us to rent, even though we have good credit and legal status. It's frustrating.

H3 also reported that there have been instances where individuals have faced housing discrimination, with landlords refusing to rent to them or demanding exorbitant deposits because of their ethnicity. According to H3, most immigrant families struggle to find secure safe and affordable housing due to housing discrimination as demonstrated by the landlords in Minnesota: H3 shared,

In the Hmong community, there have been instances where individuals have faced housing discrimination, with landlords refusing to rent to them or demanding exorbitant deposits because of their ethnicity. It's heartbreaking to see families struggling to secure safe and affordable housing

Experiences of Harassment, Humiliation, and Unfair Treatment From Landlords and Neighbors

The findings equally highlighted that immigrants frequently experienced harassment, humiliation, and unfair treatment from both landlords and neighbors. These actions include racial slurs, property vandalism, insensitive remarks about immigrants' cultures, and even unlawful entry into immigrants' apartments. These corroborate Tsuchiya et al.'s (2021) assertion that for many immigrants living in Minnesota, securing a safe, healthy, and affordable home is almost impossible due to systemic barriers that have created disparities in home ownership. The findings also revealed the urgent need for addressing the psychological and emotional toll of housing discrimination on immigrants.

Six participants contributed to this subtheme. According to the participants, immigrant tenants experienced harassment humiliation and unfair treatment from their

landlords and neighbors. Such actions of housing discrimination included harassment because of different ethnicity such as yelling and vandalizing immigrant's property, unfairly treated compared to other tenants, and constant insensitive remarks about immigrant's culture. The participants also highlighted that immigrants faced housing discrimination in terms of neighbors making insensitive comments and sometimes even entering immigrant's apartments without notice and abusing their culture including wearing of hijab making them live in constant fear taking a toll on their mental health. From the Hmong focus group, H3 reported that she was harassed by her neighbor based on her ethnicity including yelling racial slurs and vandalizing our property: "My neighbor once harassed us because of our ethnicity. He yelled racial slurs and vandalized our property. It was terrifying and left our family feeling unsafe in our own home."

Unfair treatment was mentioned by H2 who revealed that landlords and neighbors treat immigrants unfairly and differently compared to other tenants who are not immigrants based on their background. H2 stated, "I remember a time when my landlord treated me unfairly compared to other tenants, and I felt it was because of my background." H4 revealed that neighbors constantly made insensitive remarks about immigrant's culture, and it made them feel unwelcome in their community. H4 shared, "I had a neighbor who constantly made insensitive remarks about our culture, and it made me feel unwelcome." H1 narrated that the neighbor harassed the immigrant's family because of our ethnicity and cultural backgrounds. As per the participant, the findings revealed that some immigrants reported cases of harassment to the police who helped them. H1 shared, "Yes, I did report a case once. It was about my neighbor who was

harassing my family because of our ethnicity. I reported it to the local police and the harassment stopped.”

M5 demonstrated that Mexican immigrants experienced housing discrimination including blatant racism and neighbors and landlords yelling slurs at them and their family, which is terrifying, and it makes them lose the sense of belonging. M5 shared, “I've experienced some blatant racism here. People have yelled slurs at me and my family. It's terrifying, and it makes me feel like I don't belong.” Increased humiliation was experienced by M4 who reported discriminatory landlords' behavior such as unfair treatment, which made them lose the sense of belonging as immigrants due to being treated differently. M4 stated, “I felt humiliated by my landlord's behavior. It affects your sense of belonging when you're treated differently.” Harassment was experienced by S2, who expressed that neighbors harassed immigrants, including entering their apartment without notice and making sensitive remarks, including abusive language in hijab, for Somali immigrants, thus creating fear and a toll on their mental health.

Theme 5: Culture and Language Barriers Make Immigrants Vulnerable to Human Rights Violations

The findings of this study shed light on the significant challenges faced by immigrants in Minnesota due to culture and language barriers, which make them vulnerable to human rights violations. The implications of these findings have far-reaching consequences for policy, practice, and advocacy efforts aimed at addressing the rights and well-being of legal immigrants in Minnesota. Researchers have reported that for Mexicans, Somalis, and Hmong immigrants in Minnesota, a significant barrier to

healthcare access is proficiency in English. LEP compromises legal immigrants' access to healthcare by limiting the quality of interactions between patients and healthcare providers (Tsuchiya et al., 2021). Participants noted that culture and language barriers make immigrants vulnerable to human rights violations. Some participants suggested the need for English classes for immigrants to learn the language for effective communication, although it is hard to find affordable classes. Language access is another key factor in mitigating language barriers that lead to violations of immigrants due to their lack of knowledge concerning human rights violations. Participant responses suggested that to mitigate the language barrier, government agencies and service providers should offer information and services in multiple languages to immigrants. Participants also suggested the need for cultural sensitivity training to combat negative stereotypes against immigrants. Some participants highlighted that more cultural education in schools would help break down stereotypes; while others reported that it's important for police officers and landlords to receive cultural sensitivity training.

Some immigrants attended cultural sensitivity training sessions to educate others about customs and practices, hoping to reduce misunderstandings and discrimination of immigrants. Participants also suggested that staff and volunteers in organizations should undergo cultural competency training to understand the backgrounds, traditions, and sensitivities of Mexican, Somali, and Hmong immigrants. This can help reduce misunderstandings and potential biases. According to the participants, these programs focus on educating law enforcement officers, social workers, healthcare professionals, and educators about the unique cultural backgrounds and experiences of immigrants from

these communities. It has helped improve interactions between these professionals and immigrants, reducing instances of discrimination and ensuring that individuals receive fair and equitable treatment, thus reducing discrimination against immigrants in the Minnesota.

Cultural differences between immigrants and residents promote human rights violations and were also reported by participants as promoters of human rights violations through discrimination. Participants also responded that social, and cultural differences and language barriers can create isolation and misunderstandings. The lack of cultural competency among service providers and, at times, hostility from certain segments of the population can further contribute to these violations against the immigrants in Minnesota. Further, participants highlighted language barrier as a factor making immigrants vulnerable to human rights violations in Minnesota as language barriers can be isolating. It is challenging to communicate effectively in many situations. This theme has four subthemes, as discussed below.

Language Barriers Make Immigrants Vulnerable to Human Rights Violations

Nine participants contributed to this subtheme. All the participants reported that language barriers make immigrants vulnerable to human rights violations as language barriers can be isolating and challenging to communicate effectively in many situations. Participants reported that culture and language are very different from the mainstream and that can create misunderstandings as many legal immigrants often face challenges that can expose them to vulnerabilities. These challenges can include language barriers, cultural differences, and a lack of understanding of their legal rights and the complex

immigration system. Participants opined that legal immigrants, especially those from Mexico, Somalia, and Hmong communities, are frequently marginalized and isolated in Minnesota. In addition, the participant pointed out that children's education can be affected as legal immigrants, due to language barriers, are unfamiliar with the education system.

From the Hmong focus group, H3 reported that language barriers can be isolating because it is challenging to communicate effectively in many situations. H3 stated, "Language barriers can be isolating. It's challenging to communicate effectively in many situations." H1 expressed that culture and language are very different from the mainstream, and that can create misunderstandings which contribute to immigrants' vulnerability to human rights violations. H1 shared, "Well, it can be tough. Many times, our culture and language are very different from the mainstream, and that can create misunderstandings." From the Mexican focus group, M5 confirmed that the limited information in Spanish about their rights makes them need more resources and support to navigate the legal system, which makes it difficult to understand legal regulations and their rights as immigrants making them vulnerable to human rights violations by the native people of Minnesota or even other immigrants who understands the terrain and the language in Minnesota. M5 stated, "Another thing that bothers me is the lack of information in Spanish about our rights. We need more resources and support to navigate the legal system." Participants from the individual interviews also noted that limited ability to speak English due to language barriers also contributes to the vulnerability of immigrants to human rights violations in Minnesota, as reported by P1. According to P1,

the language barrier is often significant as many legal Mexican immigrants may not be fluent in English, which can make it hard for them to access information or communicate their concerns effectively. As a result, due to language and cultural barriers, they may struggle to find and communicate with attorneys or advocates, which can lead to misunderstandings. P1 stated,

Well, it's sometimes difficult to explain our problems because of the language barrier. Many of us can't speak fluent English, and that can lead to misunderstandings. For Mexican immigrants, the language barrier is often significant. Many legal Mexican immigrants may not be fluent in English, which can make it hard for them to access information or communicate their concerns effectively. Due to language and cultural barriers, they may struggle to find and communicate with attorneys or advocates. This can lead to misunderstandings, and they might not be fully aware of their rights.

P2 indicated that many Mexican immigrants may not be fluent in English, making it difficult for them to access information or communicate effectively with legal professionals due to the language barrier. This language barrier can lead to misunderstandings and delays in the legal process. Lack of access to legal information makes them vulnerable to human rights violations. P2 shared, "For Mexican immigrants, language is often the first hurdle." P3 also reported that language barriers can be a significant hurdle for the Mexican communities as limited proficiency in English can limit their access to essential services, education, and employment opportunities. The responses of H1 and P1 confirms Bleakley and Chin's (2010) assertion that English

proficiency helps immigrants integrate economically into their new home by narrowing the wage gap between immigrants and United States citizens. Limited English language proficiency is a major barrier to effective integration to the American society.

Legal immigrants face challenges that can expose them to vulnerabilities of human rights violations including language barriers. P4 reported that immigrants face various challenges, and these challenges can include language barriers, cultural differences, and a lack of understanding of their legal rights and the complex immigration system. Legal immigrants, especially those from Mexico, Somalia, and Hmong communities, are frequently marginalized and isolated. P4 stated,

When we look at legal immigrants, they often face challenges that can expose them to vulnerabilities...legal immigrants, due to language barriers and unfamiliarity with the education system, may not be able to advocate effectively for their children's educational rights... Moreover, children's education can be affected by legal immigrants, due to language barriers.”

Additionally, P4 indicated that language barriers, unfamiliarity with the legal system, and limited financial resources can exacerbate immigrant’s struggles including vulnerability to violation and discrimination, stating that “;anguage barriers, unfamiliarity with the legal system, and limited financial resources can exacerbate their struggles.” P5 also highlighted that language barriers and cultural misunderstandings often hinder access to essential services like healthcare and education. P5 shared, “When we turn our attention to the Somali community, we encounter a different set of

challenges. Language barriers and cultural misunderstandings often hinder access to essential services like healthcare and education.”

Cultural Differences Between Immigrants and Residents Promote Human Rights

Violations

Lougarre (2020) noted that the ICESCR clearly protects immigrant’s economic, social, and cultural rights in its preamble by explicitly recognizing that economic, social, and cultural rights ‘derive from the inherent dignity of the human person.’ However, not ratifying the ICESCR indicates that the United States is reluctant to wholly endorse the interdependence of human rights and the domestic enforcement of the ICESCR (Hamidi, 2020). This directly affects the degree of protection offered by the United States to the economic, social, and cultural rights of legal immigrants. The findings revealed the lack of cultural sensitivity training, which should be integrated into various sectors, including education, law enforcement, and healthcare. This can foster a better understanding of immigrant cultures and reduce the potential for discrimination and misunderstandings as legal immigrants integrate in Minnesota.

Four participants contributed to this subtheme. According to these participants, cultural differences between immigrants and residents promote human rights violations. Some participants indicated that a lack of awareness about Hmong culture leads to misunderstandings. Hmong focus group participant H3 indicated that a lack of awareness about different cultures leads to misunderstandings between immigrants and residents leading to human rights violations. H3 shared, “I think there's a lack of awareness about Hmong culture, and that leads to misunderstandings. I've had to explain our traditions

countless times.” From the Somali focus group, S2 reported that cultural differences can also be a barrier that contributes to human rights violations against immigrants in Minnesota. Cultural differences can also be a barrier that can make immigrants hesitant to seek help or report violations because they are not sure how things work, as reported by S2: “Cultural differences can also be a barrier. In Somalia, we have our way of doing things, and here it's different. It can make us hesitant to seek help or report violations because we're not sure how things work.”

S4 revealed that a lack of understanding of our culture can lead to misunderstandings among immigrants and residents contributing to human rights violations through increased discrimination. S4 stated, “Also, the lack of understanding of our culture can lead to misunderstandings. Sometimes, things that are normal for us can be seen as strange or even suspicious here.” From the individual interviews, P1 indicated that language barriers are often a significant issue, making it harder for them (Mexicans, Somalis, and Hmong) to access essential services, understand their rights, and even seek legal assistance when needed.

Need For Improved Access to English Language Learning Programs

Four participants contributed to this subtheme. The participants indicated the need for improved access to English language learning programs. Although finding affordable classes is difficult for the immigrants, immigrants need to learn English to access jobs and services as English proficiency is crucial in accessing services by the immigrants. Language barriers are a significant challenge faced by immigrants. To mitigate this, participants opined that government agencies and service providers should offer

information and services in multiple languages. This makes it easier for immigrants to access resources and navigate the system. From the Hmong focus group, H1 shared, “Well, I think one of the key things we need is more English language programs. Immigrants need to learn English to access jobs and services, but sometimes it's hard to find affordable classes.” H2 revealed that English proficiency is crucial and there is a need for improved access to English language learning programs by the immigrants to enhance their English proficiency. H2 stated, “Yes, I agree with H1, English proficiency is crucial. Also, legal aid for immigration issues should be enhanced.”

According to the responses provided by P2, “Language access is another key factor and government agencies need to provide services in numerous languages to guarantee that legal immigrants can access essential information without language obstacles,” Government agencies should provide services in multiple languages to ensure that legal immigrants can access essential information.” Enhancing language access was mentioned by P4, who stated,

Language barriers are a significant challenge for immigrants who may face discrimination challenges including human rights violation. However, to mitigate this challenge, government agencies and service providers should offer information and services in multiple languages that can be understood by the immigrants... Language barriers are a significant challenge. To mitigate this, government agencies and service providers should offer information and services in multiple languages.

The Need for Cultural Sensitivity Training to Combat Negative Stereotypes Against Immigrants

Eight participants contributed to this subtheme. The participants confirmed that there is a need for cultural sensitivity training to combat negative stereotypes against immigrants in Minnesota. Participants revealed that more cultural education in schools would help break down stereotypes and that it is important for police officers and landlords to receive cultural sensitivity training. Participants also reported that staff and volunteers in organizations should undergo cultural competency training to understand the backgrounds, traditions, and sensitivities of Mexican, Somali, and Hmong immigrants. Participants were optimistic that this can help reduce misunderstandings and potential biases against legal immigrants in Minnesota. Participants indicated that government agencies should invest in cultural competency training for their employees to ensure they can effectively communicate and serve these immigrant communities without violating their rights or discriminating against them. According to the responses from the participants, the program should focus on educating law enforcement officers, social workers, healthcare professionals, and educators about the unique cultural backgrounds and experiences of immigrants from these communities. It can help in improving interactions between these professionals and immigrants, reducing instances of discrimination, and ensuring that individuals receive fair and equitable treatment.

From the Hmong focus group, H4 reported that providing cultural education in schools can help reduce stereotypes against immigrants which may reduce human rights violations. H4 stated, “More cultural education in schools would help break down

stereotypes.” From the Mexican focus group, M3 recommended that there should be cultural sensitivity training for officials and service providers to reduce human rights violations. M2 shared, “We should also promote cultural sensitivity training for officials and service providers.” One participant provided discrepant data by revealing that many immigrants attend cultural sensitivity training sessions to educate others about their customs and practices, hoping to reduce misunderstandings and discrimination. On the same note, P1 suggested the need for more cultural exchange programs and community events that promote understanding between different communities. P2 also confirmed that there is a need for enhanced cultural competency and sensitivity training within organizations and government agencies. This would help staff better understand and respect the diverse backgrounds, needs, and experiences of immigrants from these groups. P2 stated, “First and foremost, it’s essential to enhance cultural competency and sensitivity training within organizations and government agencies.”

From individual interviews, two individual interview participants described suggestions for improving the lives of immigrants by enhancing cultural competency training programs to mitigate human rights violations. P4 corroborated P2’s perception by indicating that staff and volunteers in organizations should undergo cultural competency training to understand the backgrounds, traditions, and sensitivities of Mexican, Somali, and Hmong immigrants. They opined that this can help reduce misunderstandings and potential biases. P5 noted that government agencies should invest in cultural competency training for their employees to ensure they can effectively communicate and serve these immigrant communities in Minnesota, P5 stated that “one noteworthy example is the

Cultural Sensitivity Training Program" initiated by the Minnesota Department of Human Rights in collaboration with community organizations.

Theme 6: Legal System Complexity and Legal Immigrants' Lack of Awareness on How to Navigate the Complex Legal Environment

The study findings emphasize the significant hurdles faced by legal immigrants when attempting to navigate the United States legal system. Rubio-Hernandez and Ayon (2016) noted that most immigrants and especially asylum seekers have faced a new odyssey of navigating the complex United States immigration laws and a restrictive environment that bars them from winning the promised protection. The experiences of human rights violations are linked to the complex legal system in Minnesota and immigrants' lack of awareness on how to navigate it. This theme was supported by responses from six participants, two came from the Hmong and Mexican focus groups. In support of this theme, participants made two key arguments. The first argument was that the United States legal system is extremely complex and difficult for legal immigrants to navigate and secure justice for human rights violations committed against them. Despite the complexity of the legal environment, legal immigrants generally lack awareness and knowledge on how to navigate it. The second argument was that to address the complexity of legal system, there is need for community organizations and other stakeholders to create awareness on legal immigrants' human rights in order to assist them navigate the complex legal environment.

Lack of Knowledge and Awareness on How to Navigate the Complex Legal

Environment

The findings also revealed that systemic challenges within the legal framework disproportionately affect immigrants and refugees. For instance, participant H4, a member of the Hmong focus group, described how reporting human rights violations in the United States is difficult to navigate. According to H4, the fact that some legal immigrants are not fluent in English makes reporting human rights violations against them even more difficult since they do not understand how to go about it: “Reporting violations is complicated. When you don't speak English fluently, you might not know where to report or how to do it properly. And even if you try, sometimes, people just don't listen or take you seriously. It's discouraging.”

The complexity of the United States legal environment was also mentioned by participants P1 during individual interviews, and participant M3 during the focus group discussion with the Mexicans. Participant P1 referred to the legal framework as having several systemic challenges that mainly affect immigrants and refugees: “Legal immigrants, as well as refugees, have faced systemic challenges within the legal framework.” M3 described how complex the legal environment is from the immigration process perspective. According to M3, the process of completing immigration paperwork is confusing, stressful, and can jeopardize one's immigration status if done wrongly: “Immigration paperwork can be confusing and stressful. One mistake can jeopardize our status. Having more accessible legal advice for immigration matters is essential.”

The findings also underscored how changes in immigration laws create uncertainty and fear among immigrants. According to P2, changing laws regularly not only confuses immigrants but also burdens them with the need to constantly familiarize themselves with the new laws:

Immigrants often face difficulties in navigating the complex legal and immigration systems. Changes in policies and the uncertain immigration environment can create an atmosphere of fear and insecurity. This fear can be exploited by unscrupulous individuals or organizations, leading to rights violations

Wood (2018) confirmed this by noted that during the first 3 years in office, the Trump administration propagated three categories of policy actions on refugees and asylees, which framed the way legal immigrants were perceived and treated by some immigration enforcement officers in Minnesota. These categories included those that abandon longstanding US legal principles and policies, most notably non-refoulement and due process, blocking the entry of refugees and asylees, and those that criminalize foreign nationals who attempt to seek asylum in the United States (Wasem, 2020). These policy shifts necessitate constant familiarization with new laws. The volatile nature of immigration policies requires the development of resources and support systems that legal immigrants may use to adapt to the changing legal landscapes. The findings equally suggest the provision of up-to-date information and legal assistance by Legal aid organizations and community groups to help immigrants navigate these changes effectively and mitigate feelings of vulnerability and insecurity.

A lack of awareness about rights and available resources emerged from participants' responses as a critical issue. From P1's perspective, the issue of lack of awareness is common among Hmong immigrants. As a result of limited awareness, Hmong immigrants are unable to navigate the complexities of immigration law: "As for Hmong immigrants, they may have limited education and knowledge of the United States legal system, making it challenging to understand their rights or navigate the complexities of immigration law." The issue of lack of knowledge and awareness was also reiterated by participant P5, who argued that legal immigrants become vulnerable to exploitation and abuse:

Secondly, there is a general lack of knowledge about their rights and the available resources. This can leave legal immigrants vulnerable to exploitation and abuse, as they may not be aware of the protections afforded to them under United States laws.

These responses suggest the prioritization of educational initiatives by community organizations, legal aid agencies, and government bodies targeting legal immigrants. These initiatives should focus on raising awareness about immigrants' rights, available resources, and avenues for reporting human rights violations. The complexity of the legal system presents a formidable barrier for legal immigrants, particularly those with LEP. This barrier requires legal practitioners, policymakers, and community organizations to work collaboratively to simplify legal procedures and ensure accessibility for all, including immigrants with language barriers. Providing translated resources and

accessible information is imperative to empower immigrants to report human rights violations effectively.

Theme 7: Fear of Reporting Abuses and Violations

The study findings accentuate the significant impact of the fear of deportation and family separation on immigrants' willingness to report human rights violations. Nine participants contributed to this theme, noting the fear of reporting abuses and violations due to their immigrant status as they fear being deported if they report violations to human rights organizations or police. Most immigrants feared reporting violations claiming that to seek legal assistance would lead to their deportation and even separation from their families. Participants expressed that the fear of deportation and family separation can deter individuals from reporting abuses or seeking legal redress when their rights are violated. This vulnerability is exacerbated by the lack of affordable legal representation for immigrants, which further limits their ability to navigate the complex legal system.

The study participants revealed that the immigration enforcement climate can prevent immigrants from reporting violations, for fear that their immigration status would be scrutinized. This fear often forces them into silence, allowing human rights violations to persist. Participants also revealed that they failed to report violations for fear of retaliation from human rights violation perpetrators. Most participants fail to report violations because of fear of retaliation, or fear of not being believed by the relevant authority. The fear of repercussions, especially among the Mexican immigrant community, can be paralyzing making these immigrants fear reporting any violation and

racial discrimination from landlords and neighbors. Two subthemes emerged in the thematic analysis as described below.

Immigrants Experience Fear of Being Deported if They Report Human Rights

Violations

Two participants contributed to this subtheme by demonstrating that the majority of immigrants experience the fear of being deported if they report violations to human rights organizations. The participants revealed that the immigration enforcement climate could be the reason for fear of reporting human rights violations as they are afraid of being deported. P1 recounted that many immigrants are afraid that seeking legal assistance or reporting violations may lead to deportation or separation from their families; this is because they fear being scrutinized by law enforcement, which could result in deportation: “Many are afraid that seeking legal assistance or reporting violations may lead to deportation or separation from their families.”

P1 also reported the fear of seeking legal assistance because of the fear that their status may be scrutinized making them remain silent, thus permitting human rights violators to continue with discriminatory behaviors: “The immigration enforcement climate can deter these immigrants from reporting violations, fearing that their status may be scrutinized. This fear often forces them into silence, allowing human rights violations to persist.” P5 indicated that as immigrants they feared seeking legal assistance for the fear of deportation and family separation. Such fear deters immigrants from reporting abuses or seeking legal redress when their rights are violated. This vulnerability is exacerbated by the lack of affordable legal representation for immigrants, which further

limits their ability to navigate the complex legal system. P5 stated, “The fear of deportation and family separation can deter individuals from reporting abuses or seeking legal redress when their rights are violated. This vulnerability is exacerbated by the lack of affordable legal representation for immigrants.”

This confirms Danso and Lum’s (2013) assertion that despite their rights to due process (Fifth Amendment), Minnesota courts do not appoint immigration attorneys to represent indigent immigrants detained for civil immigration law violations. As such, immigrants must find a pro bono attorney or private lawyer willing to take their cases or forego representation all together.

Fear of Retaliation From Human Rights Violation Perpetrators

The study findings also revealed that immigrants may endure labor exploitation, wage theft, and unsafe working conditions due to their fear of reporting abuses. This not only affects their economic stability but also their physical and mental health, as noted by P5. Legal immigrants may choose to remain silent, even when they witness violations, because they fear the consequences of reporting. Some participants, such as M5, expressed doubts about whether reporting would result in any help or justice. This suggests a need for efforts to build trust between immigrant communities and law enforcement agencies, human rights organizations, and other relevant authorities.

Some of the discriminations faced by immigrants include housing discrimination, refusal to pay wages after working, losing a home after reporting violation, racial profiling by the police, wage theft and unsafe working conditions. Responding during the Hmong focus group discussion, H2 recounted that reporting feels like it might bring more

trouble, and she is not sure of getting any help at all. H2 stated, "I haven't reported anything, even though I've seen some things. Reporting feels like it might bring more trouble, and I'm not sure if they'd help." Similarly, H4 and H5 expressed that they feared reporting violations because of previous stories regarding consequences faced by other immigrants who reported violators to human rights violations. H4 shared, "I never reported anything. You hear stories of others who did and faced repercussions. I didn't want to risk it." In agreement with H4, H5 responded: "Same here. Reporting can be risky, and sometimes you're not sure who you can trust."

Participants for the Mexican focus group revealed that the fear of being reported to the immigration department is the key reason why immigrants fear reporting human rights violations, as reported by M5: "I had an incident where someone threatened to report me to immigration just because I got into an argument with them. It's terrifying to live with that kind of constant fear." M1 shared a failure to report a lack of wage payment for fear of being reported to the authorities for deportation. According to M1, workplace leaders refused to pay the minimum wage, and they threatened to report to the immigration if complaints were made against them: "Well, my workplace refused to pay me the minimum wage, and they threatened to report me to immigration if I complained. It affected my family's financial stability, and we lived in fear." Some immigrants feared reporting after facing housing discrimination for the fear of losing their homes. As reported by M4, she feared reporting housing discrimination due to fear of being deported or losing her home: "My cousin faced housing discrimination. She decided to document everything, but she's hesitant to report it because she's worried about losing her home."

Some immigrants faced racial profiling by the police, but they could not report it due to fear of what would happen if they did report, as reported by M5: “My brother was racially profiled by the police, but he didn't report it. He was afraid of what might happen if he did.” Further, M5 cited fear of retaliation and fear of not being believed as reasons not to report discrimination and human rights violations: “I haven't reported anything personally. It's mainly because of fear of retaliation, and the fear of not being believed.” From the individual interviews, P1 reported that the fear of repercussions, especially among the Mexican immigrant community, can be paralyzing as immigrants fear being attacked by the violation perpetrators or being deported: “The fear of repercussions, especially among the Mexican immigrant community, can be paralyzing.” P5 reported labor exploitation as a significant concern for immigrants since they are paid low wages or legal immigrants may be forced into low-wage jobs with poor working conditions because they fear reporting abuses, including wage theft and unsafe working conditions. This not only affects their economic stability but also their physical and mental health.

Summary

The purpose of this qualitative phenomenological study was to use the knowledge gained from participants' responses through individual interviews and focus group discussions to provide information that may contribute to policy reforms considerations to improve the treatment of legal immigrants. This goal was achieved by exploring how legal immigrants of Mexican, Somali, and Hmong descents experience human rights violations in Minnesota. In this chapter, the results of the study were presented. Findings from both the individual and focus group interviews indicated that Somali, Hmong, and

Mexican legal immigrants experience various forms of human rights violations, including educational discrimination, workplace discrimination, housing discrimination, racial profiling, and negative stereotyping. Generally, the findings across all the three focus groups were consistent with those obtained from the individual interviews; no major differences were noted. These human rights violations are mainly perpetrated by the complex legal environment in the United States and immigrants' lack of awareness on how to navigate it. Cultural differences, language barriers, and immigrants' fear of retaliation from offenders if they report violations against them all contribute to continuous human rights violations against legal immigrants in Minnesota. In Chapter 5, I discuss these findings in relation to theoretical and empirical literature. I discuss the implications and limitations of this study and make recommendations for policy reform, as well as future research and practice.

Chapter 5: Discussion, Conclusions, and Recommendations

Introduction

The purpose of this study was to use the knowledge gained from participants' responses through individual interviews and focus group discussions to provide information that may contribute to policy reform considerations to improve the treatment of legal immigrants by exploring how legal immigrants of Mexican, Somali, and Hmong descents experiences human rights violations in Minnesota. This study was conducted as a qualitative phenomenological study that explored the experiences of human rights violations against legal immigrants of Mexican, Somali, and Hmong descent in Minnesota.

This research was crucial because migration trends are evolving and impacting the connection between immigrant populations and human rights principles, yet at the time when this study was conducted, there was little or no substantial research to back up these changes especially as it related to legal immigrants (see de Haas et al., 2019). Minnesota is home to a large number of immigrants from across the world including Latin Americans, Africans, and Asians, making Minnesota's immigrant population more culturally diverse than the national immigrant population (Wasem, 2020). This cultural diversity is accompanied by incidents of human rights violations against legal immigrants, especially from Latin America, Africa, and Asia, represented in this study by Mexican, Somali, and Hmong populations. This made Minnesota an ideal location for this study, exploring the experiences of legal immigrants of Mexican, Somali, and Hmong descent on human rights violations. This study explored the experiences of

human rights violations faced by legal immigrants in Minnesota, with the hope of contributing to policy reforms that would improve the treatment of legal immigrants in host countries.

The findings from both the individual interviews and focus groups indicate that Somali, Hmong, and Mexican legal immigrants experience various forms of human rights violations, including discrimination in education, workplace discrimination, housing discrimination, racial profiling, and negative stereotyping. These human rights violations are mainly perpetrated by the complex legal environment in the United States and the huddles immigrants encounter when trying to navigate the legal system. Cultural differences, language barriers, and immigrants' fear of retaliation when they report to authorities about their human rights violations. All these contribute to the continuous human rights violations against legal immigrants in Minnesota.

To better understand the results of this study, I compare the results to what had already been covered in other literature and discuss how the theoretical framework was linked to the results. In the following section, I describe how my findings confirmed, disconfirmed, or extended knowledge in the study area by comparing the results of this study to what we knew in the review of existing literature in Chapter 2. I further discuss how the findings of the study are linked to Fineman's vulnerability theory and the theoretical framework of the study.

Interpretation of Findings

As illustrated in Table 1, there were seven main themes that emerged from the interviews and focus group discussions: (a) experiences of educational discrimination, (b)

experiences of workplace discrimination, (c) experiences of racial profiling and negative stereotyping, (d) experiences of housing discrimination, (e) cultural and language barriers that make immigrants vulnerable to human rights violations, (f) legal system complexity and lack of awareness on how to navigate the legal environment on the part of legal immigrants, and (g) the fear of reporting abuse and violations.

Experiences of Educational Discrimination

The findings of the study confirm with existing literature that despite being legally entitled to certain human rights protections, legal immigrants in Minnesota continue to face discrimination, harassment, and denial of basic services such as healthcare and education (Tsuchiya et al., 2021). Such violations not only impact the well-being and dignity of legal immigrants and their families but also pose serious challenges to their social and economic integration, exacerbating existing disparities and inequalities (Tsuchiya et al., 2021). The experiences of educational discrimination among minority populations in Minnesota, as detailed through the themes of difficulty accessing quality education and harassment and bullying in schools, can be compellingly analyzed through the lens of Fineman's vulnerability theory. The theory, which outlines the four key elements of vulnerability -- constancy, particularity, universality, and complexity (Fineman, 2010), offers a robust framework for understanding and addressing the systemic issues highlighted in the experiences of legal immigrants of Mexican, Somali, and Hmong descent in Minnesota.

Fineman (2010) maintained that vulnerability is a constant state inherent in the human condition, which requires societal institutions, such as the education system, to

respond effectively to individual needs. The difficulties in accessing quality education and the harassment faced by immigrant children in schools reflect the constant vulnerability that these populations experience. The language barrier LEP, and cultural differences create a persistent state of disadvantage, impacting their ability to integrate fully into society and the educational system. This aligns with Fineman's notion that vulnerability is constant and not episodic, underscoring the need for a responsive educational system that adapts to the diverse needs of its students.

While vulnerability is inherent to all, its manifestation is particular to each individual's situation. The specific challenges faced by Somali, Hmong, and Mexican immigrants in Minnesota's education system illustrate this particularity. For the Hmong community, there is a significant language barrier, while for the Mexican and Somali communities, deportation threats and Islamophobia have a psychological impact on children's academic performance, demonstrating unique forms of vulnerability that demand tailored responses. This particularity calls for educational policies and practices that recognize and address the distinct barriers faced by each immigrant group, rather than adopting a one-size-fits-all approach.

Despite the particularity of individual vulnerabilities, Fineman (2010) argued that vulnerability is universal -- an attribute that applies to all individuals. This universality is evident in the shared experience of educational discrimination among immigrant communities in Minnesota, regardless of their specific ethnic or national backgrounds. The universal challenge of accessing quality education and the widespread instances of harassment and bullying in schools highlight a systemic issue that affects all minority

populations, pointing to the need for comprehensive reforms that benefit all vulnerable groups within the education system.

Fineman equally emphasized the complexity of vulnerability, which arises from the interaction between individual circumstances and institutional or structural responses. The interplay between the educational discrimination faced by immigrant communities and the systemic barriers within Minnesota's education system exemplifies this complexity. For instance, the inadequate response of schools to bullying based on ethnic differences and the systemic inequities in educational outcomes by race, ethnicity, and immigration status reflect a complex web of factors that exacerbate the vulnerability of minority populations. This complexity requires a multifaceted response that addresses both individual needs and systemic inequalities.

The experiences of Somali, Hmong, and Mexican immigrants underscore the constant, particular, universal, and complex nature of vulnerability, affirming the applicability of Fineman's theoretical framework to the study. This analysis highlights the imperative for responsive state action and educational reforms that acknowledge and address the multifaceted vulnerabilities faced by minority populations, ensuring equitable access to quality education and a safe, supportive learning environment.

Workplace Discrimination

Existing literature has suggested that phenotypically, European immigrants face far less discrimination than their counterparts from Asia, Latin America, and Africa (Portes & Rumbaut, 2016). In comparing the adaptation of African, Latin American, Asian, and European immigrants in the United States, Portes and Rumbaut (2016) opined

that non-European immigrants are faced with greater obstacles than those from Europe. In another study, Danso and Lum (2013) confirmed the findings of this study by maintaining that in Minnesota, East African, Hispanic, and Asian immigrants experience higher rates of hostilities by citizens than immigrants from European countries.

Fineman posited that vulnerability is a constant, inherent aspect of the human condition, which necessitates a responsive state to address and mitigate its effects. The experiences of discrimination shared by immigrants, from being denied employment opportunities to facing wage disparities, underscore a constant vulnerability due to their ethnic backgrounds and immigration status. This constant state of vulnerability is exacerbated in the workplace, where immigrants are systematically marginalized, highlighting the need for a responsive state mechanism that can offer protections and enforce laws that curb such discriminatory practices. Fineman emphasized the particularity of vulnerability, suggesting that while it is universal, its manifestations and impacts are specific to individuals' situational contexts. In this study, the immigrants' particular vulnerabilities stem from their ethnic backgrounds, legal status, and socio-economic conditions. These factors not only make them more susceptible to exploitation and discrimination but also hinder their ability to seek redress or advancement in their workplace. The particularity of their vulnerabilities is evident in the discrimination faced in hiring practices, wage disparities, and the general workplace environment, demanding tailored responses that recognize and address these specific needs.

Despite the particularity of experiences, vulnerability is also universal; it affects all individuals irrespective of their status. The experiences of workplace discrimination

shared by the immigrants in Minnesota reflect this universality, as individuals from various ethnic backgrounds—Hmong, Mexican, Somali—report similar challenges. This universality underscores the pervasive nature of discrimination and the shared vulnerability of immigrants in the workplace, highlighting the need for universal protections and interventions that address the root causes of discrimination and vulnerability.

Fineman's vulnerability theory acknowledges the complexity of vulnerability, which arises from the interaction of multiple societal factors, including economic, legal, and social dimensions. The study's findings encapsulate this complexity, showing how workplace discrimination against immigrants is not merely about individual prejudice but is entangled with systemic issues such as the non-recognition of foreign credentials, economic exploitation, and legal inadequacies that fail to protect against discrimination. This complexity necessitates multifaceted responses that go beyond simple legal remedies to include community education, policy changes, and a cultural shift towards inclusivity and equity. The above subthemes identified in this study align with and confirm the applicability of Fineman's vulnerability theory, demonstrating how the workplace discrimination faced by immigrants in Minnesota is a manifestation of their inherent, particular, universal, and complex vulnerabilities. This analysis corroborates the relevance of Fineman's theoretical framework for understanding the challenges faced by immigrants and calls for a responsive state that is attuned to these vulnerabilities and capable of implementing measures that ensure equitable treatment and opportunities for all individuals, irrespective of their ethnic background or immigration status.

Theme 3: Experiences of Racial Profiling and Negative Stereotyping

Fineman (2010) argued that vulnerability is a constant state in human life, affecting all individuals irrespective of their socio-economic status. The arrest and detention of legal immigrants in Minnesota for reasons such as being noisy in a hotel room and for snow blocking a number plate demonstrate how racial profiling contributes to unfair treatment of immigrants by state troopers and other service providers (Tsuchiya et al., 2021). The findings of this study illustrate this constancy of vulnerability through ongoing racial profiling and discrimination faced by legal immigrants. This vulnerability is not transient but a continuous challenge that impacts their daily lives and well-being, underscoring the need for constant vigilance and responsive policies to mitigate these issues. The particularity aspect of Fineman's theory highlights how certain groups are more susceptible to specific vulnerabilities due to their unique positions in society. The study's focus on legal immigrant communities from Somali, Mexican, and Hmong backgrounds reveals how these groups face heightened vulnerability due to their racial, ethnic, and religious identities. Instances of discrimination, harassment, and racial profiling are particular to these communities' experiences, illustrating how vulnerabilities are not uniform but tailored to individuals' social, cultural, and legal contexts. This necessitates tailor-made responses by the state to address the treatment of these communities and protect them from human rights violations.

Despite the particularities of each group's experiences, the universality of vulnerability is evident in the shared experiences of discrimination and negative stereotyping across different immigrant communities. Fineman (2010) emphasized that

vulnerability is a universal condition, affecting all individuals and groups at various points in their lives. The data showed that, regardless of origin, legal immigrant communities face systemic challenges that underscore the universal aspect of vulnerability, necessitating a broad, inclusive approach to policy-making and social support. The complexity of vulnerability is demonstrated through the multifaceted impacts of racial profiling, discrimination, and negative stereotyping on immigrant communities. These experiences do not exist in isolation but are interconnected with various aspects of individuals' lives, including their mental health, trust in law enforcement, and ability to integrate into society. The study findings reveal how these issues complicate the lives of immigrants, affecting everything from access to healthcare and legal representation to their sense of belonging and identity. This complexity requires nuanced, multifaceted responses from the state and society to address the root causes and wide-ranging effects of these vulnerabilities.

The experiences of the Mexica, Somali, and Hmong legal immigrant communities serve as a vivid illustration of the constancy, particularity, universality, and complexity of vulnerability, reinforcing the applicability of the study to this theoretical framework. This analysis confirms the need for a responsive state that actively works to mitigate the vulnerabilities faced by immigrant communities, ensuring their protection, inclusion, and equitable treatment within society.

Theme 4 - Experiences of Housing Discrimination

According to Dion (2001), in the early 2000s, Somali Americans reported higher levels of perceived housing discrimination compared to other immigrants in the United

States. Responses from participants highlighted that legal immigrants of Hmong, Mexican, and Somali communities, commonly face discrimination when seeking housing due to their ethnicity and immigrant status.

By examining the reported instances of discrimination, exploitation, harassment, and the emotional toll on Mexican, Somali, and Hmong legal immigrants, it is evident how these experiences align with the four key elements of vulnerability identified by Fineman (2010): constancy, particularity, universality, and complexity. In the context of housing discrimination against immigrants, the constancy of vulnerability is reflected in the ongoing and persistent nature of discriminatory practices. Immigrants continually face barriers in securing housing due to their ethnicity and immigrant status. This ongoing struggle represents the constancy of vulnerability, emphasizing the need for responsive measures to mitigate these challenges. The effects of vulnerability are particular, affecting individuals and groups in specific, differentiated ways. The experiences of the Somali, Hmong, and Mexican communities highlight this particularity. Each group faces discrimination not just on the basis of being immigrants but also due to specific racial, ethnic, and cultural factors. This discrimination manifests in unique challenges, such as being denied housing, charged higher rents, and exposed to substandard living conditions, showcasing the specific ways in which vulnerability affects these groups. This calls for policy reforms that address the specific challenges of each of these groups to mitigate housing discrimination in Minnesota.

Vulnerability as a universal condition, affecting all individuals and groups at some point, shows that housing discrimination is not an isolated issue affecting only a

few but is a widespread problem that impacts many immigrants. This universality requires a collective response and the implementation of policies and practices that address the systemic nature of housing discrimination. The interplay between economic exploitation, emotional distress, and social exclusion faced by immigrants demonstrates the complexity of vulnerability. Discriminatory practices in housing not only affect the material conditions of immigrants but also their psychological wellbeing and sense of belonging. This complexity requires multifaceted solutions that address both the immediate and underlying causes of discrimination. These findings affirm the need for a responsive state that recognizes and addresses the vulnerabilities of immigrants through comprehensive policies and practices. Legislative action, enforcement of housing regulations, and support services are critical in mitigating the impacts of discrimination and fostering an environment where all individuals have the opportunity to secure safe, affordable, and dignified housing.

Theme 5: Culture and Language Barriers Make Immigrants Vulnerable to Human Rights Violations

The findings of this study shed light on the significant challenges faced by immigrants in Minnesota due to culture and language barriers, which make them vulnerable to human rights violations. Language barriers cause conflicts between job duties and English lessons as immigrants sometimes face a paradox in which they need to attain greater levels of English fluency but would have to miss work that provides vital income to attend these language classes (Wasem, 2020). This limits their economic ability to take care of their needs and those of other family members. The findings of this

research confirmed the applicability of Fineman's theoretical framework by illustrating how these elements of vulnerability manifest in the experiences of legal immigrants, and they underscore the need for a responsive state that addresses these vulnerabilities. Fineman discussed vulnerability as a constant aspect of the human condition, suggesting that all individuals are vulnerable at any given time and in some way. This study highlighted how the constant challenge of language and cultural barriers renders immigrants perpetually vulnerable to human rights violations. This constant vulnerability necessitates ongoing support and responsive measures from the state and its institutions to mitigate these risks and ensure the well-being of immigrants. The particularity of vulnerability refers to the specific circumstances or characteristics that exacerbate an individual's or group's vulnerability. In the context of the study, immigrants' particular vulnerabilities arise from their LEP and the cultural differences they navigate in Minnesota. These particular factors not only hinder their economic integration and access to basic resources but also expose them to potential human rights violations. The study illustrated how the particular vulnerabilities of immigrants necessitate tailored responses, such as access to English language programs and cultural sensitivity training.

While vulnerability is shaped by particular conditions, it is also a universal aspect of the human condition, affecting all individuals regardless of their specific circumstances. The study's focus on immigrants in Minnesota reflects a broader universal truth about the vulnerability of immigrants across Minnesota, who face similar challenges of language and cultural barriers in different contexts. This universality underscores the importance of acknowledging and addressing the vulnerabilities of immigrants as a

global concern, requiring cooperative and comprehensive approaches. Fineman emphasized the complexity of vulnerability, which arises from the interconnectedness of various social, economic, and institutional factors. The study revealed the complexity of immigrants' vulnerabilities, showing how language and cultural barriers are intertwined with broader issues of access to healthcare, legal rights, and social integration. This complexity demands multifaceted responses that address not only the immediate barriers but also the systemic conditions that perpetuate vulnerability.

The study's findings on the challenges faced by immigrants in Minnesota due to language and cultural barriers resonate with Fineman's vulnerability theory, illustrating the constancy, particularity, universality, and complexity of their vulnerabilities. The study confirmed the need for a responsive state that recognizes and addresses these vulnerabilities through comprehensive policies and practices aimed at facilitating immigrants' integration and protecting their rights. This aligns with Fineman's call for a responsive state that actively works to mitigate vulnerabilities and foster resilience among its most vulnerable population.

Theme 6: Legal System Complexity and Legal Immigrants' Lack of Awareness on How to Navigate the Complex Legal Environment

The study findings confirm the significant hurdles faced by legal immigrants when attempting to navigate the United States legal system. Rubio-Hernandez and Ayon (2016) noted that most immigrants especially asylum seekers have faced a new odyssey of navigating the complex United States immigration laws and a restrictive environment that bars them from winning the promised protection. This theme aligns closely with

Fineman's vulnerability theory, confirming the applicability of the study to the theoretical framework by illustrating the multifaceted challenges legal immigrants face, underscoring their vulnerability within the legal system. Vulnerability, according to Fineman, is a constant state in human conditions; it does not ebb and flow but is an inherent aspect of the human experience. The constant challenge faced by legal immigrants in understanding and navigating the complex legal system in the United States, as highlighted by the study's findings, mirrors this element of constancy in vulnerability. Immigrants continually face barriers such as language difficulties, lack of awareness of their rights, and the intricacies of immigration laws and procedures. This constant challenge creates a perpetual state of vulnerability for legal immigrants in Minnesota.

Fineman also discussed the particularity of vulnerability, noting that while it is universal, individuals experience vulnerability in specific and often unique ways. This notion is reflected in the experiences of different immigrant groups mentioned in the study, such as the Hmong immigrants, who face specific challenges related to language barriers, limited education, and knowledge of the legal system. These particularities necessitate tailored solutions and support systems to effectively address and mitigate the vulnerabilities faced by distinct immigrant communities. The universality of vulnerability refers to its all-encompassing nature, affecting all individuals regardless of their specific circumstances. The systemic challenges within the legal framework that disproportionately affect immigrants and refugees, as identified in the study, underscore this universality. Every immigrant, regardless of their origin, status, or intentions,

encounters these systemic obstacles, highlighting the universal vulnerability of immigrants navigating the United States legal system.

The complexity of vulnerability is illustrated through the intricate web of legal, systemic, and personal challenges faced by immigrants. The study's findings point to the complexity of immigration laws, the evolving nature of policies, and the multifaceted barriers to accessing justice and understanding rights. This complexity necessitates a responsive state that provides accessible legal aid, clear and simplified procedures, and education on rights and resources. Such measures would address the complexity of immigrants' vulnerability, aligning with Fineman's call for a responsive state that actively works to mitigate vulnerability through thoughtful and inclusive policies and support systems. The themes identified in this study not only highlight the challenges faced by legal immigrants in the United States but also deeply resonate with Fineman's vulnerability theory. The constant, particular, universal, and complex nature of these challenges confirms the applicability of the study to the theoretical framework, emphasizing the need for a responsive state that acknowledges and addresses the inherent vulnerabilities of legal immigrants through comprehensive support and reform.

Theme 7: Fear of Reporting Abuses and Violations

Research has shown that being and staying healthy is a fundamental right of every human being, and a prerequisite for all people to work, be productive, contribute to economic and social development in both countries of origin and destination, and improve livelihoods (Gany et al., 2013). The study findings accentuate the significant impact of the fear of deportation and family separation on immigrants' willingness to

report human rights violations. As P1 stated, “Many are afraid that seeking legal assistance or reporting violations may lead to deportation or separation from their families.” This fear deters individuals from seeking legal assistance or reporting abuses when their rights are violated and hinders legal immigrants from attaining their full potential. Fineman's framework, which posits vulnerability as a constant, particular, universal, and complex condition of the human experience, provides a useful lens through which to analyze the study's findings. This study's findings highlight the constant fear of deportation and family separation faced by legal immigrants, as a manifestation of their perpetual vulnerability. This fear is not occasional or conditional but a continuous state that influences their decisions and actions, such as the reluctance to report human rights violations or seek legal assistance. The theory also emphasizes the particularity of vulnerability, suggesting that specific groups or individuals may face unique vulnerabilities based on their societal position or circumstances (Fineman, 2010). This study underlines this aspect by showing how legal immigrants, especially those without legal representation, are particularly vulnerable. They are uniquely impacted by the fear of legal repercussions, which discourages them from reporting abuses or seeking help. This particularity underscores the need for targeted interventions that address the specific vulnerabilities of immigrant communities.

Pointing to the universality of vulnerability, Fineman (2010) argued that vulnerability is a condition that affects all humans, albeit in different ways and degrees. This study's focus on legal immigrants' fears reflects this universality, as it is a specific instance of the broader human condition of vulnerability. Every human being can face

situations that expose them to harm or abuse, but the universality of vulnerability also calls for a universal approach to protections and rights, including those for immigrants. Finally, Fineman recognized the complexity of vulnerability, which is shaped by a confluence of various societal, economic, and legal factors. This study's findings demonstrate this complexity, showing how the fear of reporting abuses among legal immigrants is not merely about legal consequences but also ties into issues of economic exploitation, physical and mental health, and the broader immigration enforcement climate. This complexity suggests that addressing the vulnerabilities of immigrants requires a multifaceted approach that considers all these interrelated factors.

This study not only confirms the applicability of Fineman's theoretical framework but also highlights the need for responsive state mechanisms that can address and mitigate the vulnerabilities faced by legal immigrants, in line with the theory's call for a responsive state that recognizes and acts upon the vulnerabilities of its subjects (Fineman, 2010).

Limitations of the Study

While this study contributes to the literature by providing additional information on the lived experiences of human rights violations against immigrants, it is important to note that this study does have its limitations, which necessitates further research in the study area.

The study was conducted with a carefully selected, albeit limited, sample size of 20 participants, comprising 15 legal immigrants from three distinct backgrounds—five Mexicans, five Somalis, and five Hmong—who engaged in three focus group

discussions, alongside three human rights experts and two immigration advocates. While the sample size is modest, it is crucial to acknowledge that data saturation was achieved within the scope of this research. Given the specific demographic composition and the limited number of participants, the results may not fully represent the broader population of legal immigrants residing in Minnesota.

The selection of participants from only three immigrant communities and the inclusion of a limited number of human rights experts and immigration advocates mean that the experiences and perspectives captured in this study are deeply informative yet might not encapsulate the full diversity of experiences across the wider legal immigrant population in the region. Despite these limitations, the qualitative nature of this research and the achievement of data saturation ensured that the study provided valuable insights into the participants' experiences and perceptions regarding human rights violations against legal immigrants. These insights may be used to inform policy discussions and interventions aimed at improving the treatment of legal immigrants. Nonetheless, future research with a larger and more diverse sample could enhance the generalizability of the findings and provide a more comprehensive understanding of the issues faced by the broader population of immigrants in Minnesota and potentially beyond.

Another limitation was language barriers as English is not a first language for Mexican, Somali, and Hmong immigrant populations. This has the potential to negatively impact the richness of the data. To mitigate this limitation, I used purposive sampling to find and recruit only participants who were proficient in English. While this selection of proficient English-speaking participants served the purpose of providing valuable data, it

also limited the experiences of participants to only those who were proficient in English as reflecting the larger population of legal immigrants within their communities. Also, the time frame for data collection was limited due to the time to complete the study as per the University and IRB guidelines.

While it was impossible to eliminate all personal influence, I acknowledged my personal biases and consciously made efforts to separate my experiences from the study. Also, the use of data from focus group discussions and individual interviews helped to validate the findings of this study. I also conducted member checking after transcribing the collected data before I began data analysis, to ensure that I captured the lived experiences of the participants without any personal biases. I also mitigated personal biases by seeking diverse perspectives from human rights experts and immigration advocates in individual interviews, as well as legal immigrants from the three immigrant communities in focus group discussions. This helped me to stay objective and focused on the collected data during the data analysis and interpretation of findings.

The limitation of respondents providing tailored responses that are not based on lived experiences, just to get through with the process of focus group discussion, or to fit in the current narrative from the news or peers was mitigated by carefully selecting independent-minded participants for focus group discussions. While this study is limited to empirical investigations on human rights violations and its impact on legal immigrants in Minnesota, future research might use different instruments to assess different components, including stress, exhaustion, resilience, organizational support, or organizational commitment.

Recommendations

Recommendations for Action

The findings of this study revealed significant insights into the lived experiences of human rights violations against legal immigrants in Minnesota. This has a direct connection to the purpose of the study, which is to provide information that may contribute to policy reform considerations to improve the treatment of legal immigrants. After interpreting the results of the study and reviewing the findings considering Fineman's vulnerability theory, I would recommend the following.

To address educational disparities affecting legal immigrants, policymakers and aid organizations should consider implementing policies that ensure equitable access to high-quality education, especially for immigrant children. This involves addressing language barriers and providing culturally relevant teaching materials and support. Additionally, schools should be equipped with resources to effectively engage with parents who have LEP, to help them support their children's education. Schools should also actively combat harassment and bullying, particularly against immigrant children. Training programs for teachers and staff to recognize and address discrimination and bullying should be implemented. Schools should foster an inclusive environment that celebrates diversity and provides support for students facing harassment, thereby improving their mental health and academic performance.

The study indicates a need to combat workplace discrimination against legal immigrants. This can be achieved through stricter enforcement of antidiscrimination laws and policies that promote diversity and inclusion in the workplace. Employers should be

encouraged to recognize foreign credentials and provide training programs to help immigrants integrate into the workforce. There is also a need for awareness campaigns and legal support services to help immigrants understand and assert their rights in the workplace. This includes addressing wage disparities and ensuring fair employment practices. Providing platforms for immigrants to safely report discrimination without fear of retaliation is crucial for a more equitable work environment.

To tame racial profiling and negative stereotyping, law enforcement and media organizations should be trained in cultural sensitivity and antidiscrimination practices. Policies that promote fair treatment and prevent racial profiling should be enforced, with regular monitoring and accountability mechanisms in place. Community outreach programs to improve police-immigrant relations and media campaigns that positively represent immigrant communities can help reduce stereotyping and discrimination. Such efforts can foster a sense of belonging and trust among immigrants, improving their integration and participation in society.

The study also underscores the need for stronger enforcement of fair housing laws and regulations. This includes training for landlords and property managers on anti-discrimination laws and the importance of providing equal housing opportunities to immigrants. Monitoring and penalties for discriminatory practices should be enhanced. Additionally, support services for immigrants facing housing discrimination, such as legal aid and counseling, should be made more accessible. Policies that ensure affordable and safe housing for immigrant communities are essential for their wellbeing and integration into society.

To address language and cultural barriers, there should be expanded access to English language learning programs for immigrants. These programs should be affordable and easily accessible. Also, government agencies, healthcare providers, and legal services should offer multilingual resources to cater to the diverse immigrant population. Cultural competency training for service providers, including educators, healthcare professionals, and law enforcement, is crucial. This training should focus on understanding and respecting the diverse cultures and practices of immigrant communities, thereby reducing misunderstandings, and improving service delivery.

The complexity of the legal system poses a significant challenge for immigrants. Simplifying legal procedures and providing accessible information and resources in multiple languages can empower immigrants to understand and navigate the legal system effectively. Legal aid organizations should offer guidance and support in immigration procedures and legal rights. Reforms in immigration policies to make them more straightforward and less stressful for immigrants are crucial. This includes providing clear guidelines and minimizing bureaucratic hurdles, thereby easing the process of obtaining legal status and accessing rights and services.

To encourage immigrants to report abuses and violations, a safe and supportive reporting environment is essential. This includes protection against retaliation and deportation for those who report violations. Building trust between immigrant communities and law enforcement, as well as human rights organizations, is key. Legal aid and support services should be made more accessible and affordable for immigrants.

Public awareness campaigns on the rights of immigrants and the importance of reporting abuses can help mitigate the fear and encourage active participation in seeking justice.

Recommendation for Further Research

Although the findings of this qualitative phenomenological study provided lived experiences of human rights violations against legal immigrants, further research is needed in this area to explore the specific barriers and challenges faced by different legal immigrant subgroups. There is a need for future research that expands this study using a mixed methods approach in a similar context. Combining both qualitative and quantitative approaches would be particularly well-suited for exploring complex phenomena like the experiences of human rights violations against legal immigrants. This approach would allow researchers to capture the depth and breadth of these experiences, providing a comprehensive understanding of the issues at hand. Understanding the nuances of discrimination and challenges within these subgroups can inform more targeted and effective policies and interventions.

For impact assessment, researchers may explore questions like the following: What are the short-term and long-term psychological impacts of experiencing human rights violations on legal immigrants? A mixed methods approach can quantify the level of impact through psychological scales and explore the personal, subjective experiences of individuals to provide a more nuanced understanding of these impacts. Research focusing on the long-term psychological and social impacts of discrimination on immigrants can also provide deeper insights into developing comprehensive support systems for these communities.

Mixed methods research on comparative analysis would be best suited to explore a research question like the following: How do experiences of human rights violations differ across various legal immigrant subgroups? Quantitative data can reveal statistically significant differences or trends across subgroups, using variables like country of origin, gender, age, or socioeconomic status, while qualitative insights can delve into the reasons behind these differences.

Beyond increasing the sample size, quantitative analysis can provide statistical validation by validating hypotheses generated from qualitative data and providing statistical evidence that supports or refutes the findings of this study. Quantitative methods can also help identify potential correlations or causal relationships between variables like the relationship between the length of time in the host country and the likelihood of reporting human rights violations. This can offer insights into underlying patterns that qualitative data alone may not reveal. Additionally, while qualitative research offers deep insights into individual experiences, quantitative research can test whether these insights hold true across a larger population, enhancing the generalizability of the findings. The quantitative element would complement qualitative insights by adding breadth, allowing for statistical analysis, enhancing generalizability, and identifying patterns and relationships that deepen the understanding of the complex experiences of legal immigrants facing human rights violations.

Implications

The findings of this study can be used to understand human rights violations against legal immigrants and may contribute to policy reform considerations to improve

the treatment of legal immigrants. I have reviewed the implications of this study in relation to practice, theory, social change, and social well-being.

Social Change

Driving Social Change Through Awareness and Policy Reform

The study highlights the urgent need for social change, particularly in addressing systemic discrimination and biases against legal immigrants. By bringing to light the experiences of immigrants in education, employment, and other spheres, the study calls for increased public awareness and advocacy. This could lead to policy reforms aimed at ensuring equal opportunities and treatment for immigrants, thereby fostering a more inclusive and equitable society.

Building Inclusive Communities

The findings emphasize the importance of community efforts in supporting immigrants. This involves not only policy changes but also grassroots initiatives to educate and sensitize the broader population about the challenges faced by immigrants. Such efforts can help in breaking down stereotypes, reducing discrimination, and promoting a culture of acceptance and respect for diversity, which is fundamental to social cohesion and harmony.

Social Wellbeing

Impact on Immigrants' Wellbeing

The study's findings are critical for understanding the holistic impact of discrimination and systemic barriers on the well-being of legal immigrants. The experiences of educational and workplace discrimination, cultural and language barriers,

and difficulties in accessing essential services like healthcare and housing significantly affect the mental and physical health of immigrants. This underscores the need for comprehensive health and social services that address these unique challenges and support the overall well-being of immigrant communities.

Promoting Mental Health and Social Integration

The implications for wellbeing extend beyond addressing immediate needs to ensure long-term mental health support and social integration. The study points to the necessity of creating supportive environments where immigrants can thrive, feel valued, and contribute to society. This includes providing mental health services sensitive to cultural and linguistic differences and creating opportunities for social engagement and community building.

Overall, the study's findings have profound implications across these areas, calling for concerted efforts from various stakeholders to address the challenges faced by legal immigrants and to foster an inclusive and supportive environment for them.

Theory

Fineman's Vulnerability Theory

The study's findings resonate deeply with Fineman's vulnerability theory, highlighting the constant, particular, universal, and complex nature of vulnerability experienced by legal immigrants. This reinforces the theory's assertion that vulnerability is an inherent human condition, influenced by various factors like ethnicity, culture, and language. The study contributes to the theoretical discourse by providing empirical

evidence of how these vulnerabilities manifest in real-world settings, thereby enriching our understanding of Fineman's theoretical framework.

Broadening the Application of Theoretical Concepts

The study challenges and extends existing theoretical concepts by showing how vulnerabilities are not just individual but also systemic, affecting entire communities. This has implications for theories related to immigration, social justice, and human rights. The study suggests that theories in these fields need to account for the complexities of immigrant experiences, including the intersecting aspects of race, culture, language, and legal status.

Practice

Addressing Discrimination and Barriers

The findings of this study have significant implications for practitioners working with immigrant communities. The highlighted experiences of discrimination in education, the workplace, and housing necessitate the development of targeted interventions to support legal immigrants. This includes providing culturally and linguistically appropriate services, advocating for their rights, and assisting them in navigating complex legal and social systems. The study stresses the importance of enhancing language and cultural competency among service providers, which is crucial for effective communication and understanding the unique challenges faced by these communities.

Enhancing Legal and Social Support Systems

The study underscores the need for legal reforms and improved support systems to protect the rights of legal immigrants. Practitioners should focus on educating

immigrants about their rights and available resources, particularly in areas like legal system navigation, health care access, and housing rights. This requires collaborative efforts between legal aid organizations, community groups, and policymakers to create accessible, immigrant-friendly services that reduce vulnerabilities and empower immigrant communities.

Conclusion

Employing a qualitative phenomenological design, I explored the lived experiences of human rights violations against legal immigrants in Minnesota and provided a comprehensive analysis of the same, underlining the multifaceted challenges they face in various aspects of their lives. The findings highlight seven key themes: educational discrimination, workplace discrimination, racial profiling and negative stereotyping, housing discrimination, cultural and language barriers, complexities of the legal system, and fear of reporting abuses and violations. These themes underscore the prevalent nature of discrimination and barriers that legal immigrants encounter, ranging from difficulties in accessing quality education and fair employment opportunities to facing harassment and systemic biases in housing and other societal interactions.

The findings of this study resonate profoundly with Fineman's vulnerability theory, which posits that vulnerability is a constant, particular, universal, and complex human condition. This theoretical framework helps to understand the particular challenges faced by immigrants, which vary based on ethnicity, culture, and language. The study extends the application of theoretical concepts by demonstrating that vulnerabilities are not just individual but also systemic, affecting entire immigrant

communities. These findings suggest the need for a responsive state that adapts to human vulnerabilities, emphasizing the importance of structural changes to address the realities of human dependency and vulnerability.

Finally, the study underscores the urgent need for systemic changes in policies and practices to protect the rights and dignity of immigrants. This includes addressing language barriers, ensuring fair employment practices, and providing legal support. The study calls for concerted efforts from various stakeholders, including policymakers, legal aid organizations, community groups, and service providers, to create accessible, immigrant-friendly services that reduce vulnerabilities and empower immigrant communities. The findings of the study are significant in informing policy reforms, advocating for social change, and enhancing the social wellbeing of legal immigrants, emphasizing the importance of building inclusive communities that respect diversity and promote equity.

References

- Abascal, M., Huang, T. J., & Tran, V. C. (2021). Intervening in anti-immigrant sentiments: The causal effects of factual information on attitudes toward immigration. *The ANNALS of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, 697(1), 174–191. <https://doi.org/10.1177/00027162211053987>
- Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality. (2017, October). *2016 national healthcare quality and disparities report* (AHRQ Pub. No. 17-0001). <https://www.ahrq.gov/research/findings/nhqrdr/nhqrdr16/index.html>
- Akomolafe, S. (2013). The invisible minority: Revisiting the debate on foreign accented speakers and upward mobility in the workplace. *Journal of Cultural Diversity*, 20(1), 7-14.
- Alberto, Q., & Klaus, H. (2019). Priorities and human rights, *The International Journal of Human Rights*, 23(4): 679–697. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13642987.2018.1562917>
- Ali, I. (2011). Staying off the bottom of the melting pot: Somali refugees respond to a changing U.S. immigration climate. *Bildhaan: An International Journal of Somali Studies*, 9(11): 82–114. <https://digitalcommons.macalester.edu/bildhaan/vol9/iss1/11/>
- Alhazmi, A., & Kaufmann, A. (2022). Phenomenological qualitative methods applied to the analysis of cross-cultural experience in novel educational social contexts, *Frontiers in Psychology*, 13(12):1-12. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2022.785134>

- Alulema, D. (2019). DACA and the Supreme Court: How we got to this point, a statistical profile of who is affected, and what the future may hold for DACA beneficiaries. *Journal on Migration and Human Security*, 7(4), 123–130. <https://doi.org/10.1177/2331502419893674>
- Androff, D., & Mathis, C. (2022). Human rights-based social work practice with immigrants and asylum seekers in a legal service organization. *Journal of Human Rights and Social Work*, 7(2), 178–188. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s41134-021-00197-7>
- Barwise, A., Tschida-Reuter, D., & Sutor, B. (2021). Adaptations to interpreter services for hospitalized patients during the COVID-19 pandemic. *Mayo Clinic Proceedings*, 96(12), 3184–3185. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.mayocp.2021.10.009>
- Baumgärtel, M. (2020). Facing the challenge of migratory vulnerability in the European court of human rights. *Netherlands Quarterly of Human Rights*, 38(1), 12–29. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0924051919898127>
- Beckett, A. G., Viaud, L., Heisler, M., & Mukherjee, J. (2022). Misusing Public Health as a Pretext to End Asylum - Title 42. *The New England journal of medicine*, 386(16), e41. <https://doi.org/10.1056/NEJMp2200274>
- Berkel, C., Knight, G. P., Zeiders, K. H., Tein, J. Y., Roosa, M. W., Gonzales, N. A., & Saenz, D. (2010). Discrimination and adjustment for Mexican American adolescents: A prospective examination of the benefits of culturally-related values. *Journal of Research on Adolescence: the Official Journal of the Society*

for Research on Adolescence, 20(4), 893–915. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1532-7795.2010.00668.x>

Bleakley, H., & Chin, A. (2004). Language skills and earnings: Evidence from childhood immigrants. *Review of Economics and Statistics*, 86(2), 481-496.
<https://doi.org/10.1162/003465304323031067>

Bleakley, H., & Chin, A. (2010). Age at arrival, English proficiency, and social assimilation among U.S. immigrants. *American Economic Journal. Applied Economics*, 2(1), 165-192. <https://doi.org/10.1257/app.2.1.165>

Bourgois, P., Holmes, S. M., Sue, K., & Quesada, J. (2017). Structural vulnerability: Operationalizing the concept to address health disparities in clinical care. *Academic Medicine: Journal of the Association of American Medical Colleges*, 92(3), 299–307. <https://doi.org/10.1097/ACM.0000000000001294>

Boyle, A. (2018). Soft Law In International Law-making. In Evans, M (ed.), *International Law*, (5th ed). Oxford: Oxford University Press, 119–137.

Brabeck, K., & Xu, Q. (2010). The impact of detention and deportation on Latino immigrant children and families: A quantitative exploration. *Hispanic Journal of Behavioral Sciences*, 32(3), 341–361. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0739986310374053>

Braun V., Clarke V. (2006). Using thematic analysis in psychology. *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, 3, 77–101. <http://doi.org/10.1191/1478088706qp063oa>

Braun, V., Clarke, V., Hayfield, N., & Terry, G. (2019). Thematic analysis. In P. Liamputtong (Ed.), *Handbook of research methods in health social sciences* (pp. 843-860). Springer.

- Bromley, E., Nunes, A., & Phipps, M. G. (2012). Disparities in pregnancy healthcare utilization between Hispanic and non-Hispanic White women in Rhode Island. *Maternal and Child Health Journal, 16*(8): 1576–1582. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10995-011-0850-5>
- Burr, J. A., Mutchler, J. E., & Gerst, K. (2010). Patterns of residential crowding among Hispanics in later life: Immigration, assimilation, and housing market factors. *Journals of Gerontology, 65B*(6): 772–782. <https://doi.org/10.1093/geronb/gbq069>
- Campbell, K. A., Orr, E., Durepos, P., Nguyen, L., Li, L., Whitmore, C., Gehrke, P., Graham, L., & Jack, S. M. (2021). Reflexive thematic analysis for applied qualitative health research. *The Qualitative Report, 26*(6), 2011-2028. <https://doi.org/10.46743/2160-3715/2021.5010>
- Cartwright, E. (2011). Immigrant dreams: Legal pathologies and structural vulnerabilities along the immigration continuum. *Medical anthropology, 30*(5), 475-495. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01459740.2011.577044>
- Castelli, F. (2018). Drivers of migration: why do people move? *Journal of Travel Medicine, 25*(1). <https://doi.org/10.1093/jtm/tay040>
- Chambers, S. (2017). Somalis in the Twin Cities and Columbus, *Immigrant Incorporation in New Destination*, PA: Temple University Press.
- Chang, R. (2000). *Disoriented: Asian Americans, law, and the nation-state*, New York: New York University Press.

- Cheng, T. (2008). The Universal Declaration of Human Rights at Sixty: Is It Still Right for the United States, *Cornell International Law journal*, 41(2). Retrieved from: <http://scholarship.law.cornell.edu/cilj/vol41/iss2/2>
- Chiswick, B. R., & Miller, P. W. (1995). The endogeneity between language and earnings: International analyses. *Journal of labor economics*, 13(2), 246-288. <https://doi.org/10.1086/298374>
- Clark, E., Fredricks, K., Woc-Colburn, L., Bottazzi, M. E., & Weatherhead, J. (2020). Disproportionate impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on immigrant communities in the United States. *PLoS Neglected Tropical Diseases*, 14(7): <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pntd.0008484>
- Crenshaw, K. W. (2017). Race liberalism and the deradicalization of racial reform. *Harvard Law Review* 130(9): 2298. Available at: https://scholarship.law.columbia.edu/faculty_scholarship/2862
- Creswell, J.W. and Poth, C.N. (2018) *Qualitative Inquiry and Research Design Choosing among Five Approaches*, (4th Ed), SAGE Publications, Inc., Thousand Oaks.
- Danso, K., & Lum, T. (2013). Intergroup relations and predictors of immigrant experience. *Journal of Ethnic & Cultural Diversity in Social Work*, 22(1), 60-75. <http://doi.org/10.1080/15313204.2013.756733>.
- Darboe, K. (2003). New Immigrants in Minnesota: The Somali Immigration and Assimilation. *Journal of Developing Societies*, 19(4), 458–472. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0169796X0301900402>

- de Haas, H., Czaika, M., Flahaux, M.-L., Mahendra, E., Natter, K., Vezzoli, S. & Villares-Varela, M. (2019). International Migration: Trends, Determinants, and Policy Effects. *Population and Development Review*, 45(4): 885-922. <https://doi.org/10.1111/padr.12291>
- De Jong, G. and Madamba, A. (2002). A double disadvantage? Minority group, immigrant status and unemployment, and underemployment in the United States. *Social Science Quarterly*, 82 (1):114-117. <https://doi.org/10.1111/0038-4941.00011>.
- Denzin, N. K., & Lincoln, Y. S. (2013). Chapter 1: Introduction: The Discipline and Practice of Qualitative Research, In, *The Landscape of Qualitative Research* (4th ed.), 1–44. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- Diamant, J. (2017, July 26). American Muslims are concerned – but also satisfied with their lives. Retrieved from <http://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2017/07/26/american-muslims-are-concerned-but-also-satisfied-with-their-lives/>
- Dion, K. L. (2001). Immigrants' perceptions of housing discrimination in Toronto: The housing new Canadians project. *Journal of Social Issues*, 57(3): 523–539. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1111/0022-4537.00227>
- Donato, K. M., & Amuedo-Dorantes, C. (2020). The Legal Landscape of U.S. Immigration: An Introduction, *Journal of the Social Sciences*, 6(3) 1-16. <https://doi.org/10.7758/RSF.2020.6.3.01>.

- Donnelly, J. (2013). *Universal Human Rights in Theory and Practice*. Cornell, Cornell University Press.
- DuBard, C. A., & Gizlice, Z. (2008). Language spoken and differences in health status, access to care, and receipt of preventive services among U.S. Hispanics. *American Journal of Public Health, 98*(11): 2021–2028. <https://doi.org/10.2105/AJPH.2007.119008>
- Ellis, B. H., Sideridis, G., Davis, S. H., Cardeli, E., Abdi, S. M., & Lincoln, A. K. (2022). Discrimination and mental health of Somali immigrants in North America: a longitudinal study from 2013 to 2019. *Social Psychiatry and Psychiatric Epidemiology*. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s00127-022-02235-9>
- Ellis, B. H., MacDonald, H. Z., Klunk-Gillis, J., Lincoln, A., Strunin, L., & Cabral, H. J. (2010). Discrimination and mental health among Somali refugee adolescents: The role of acculturation and gender. *American Journal of Orthopsychiatry, 80*(4): 564–575. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1939-0025.2010.01061.x>
- Engelman, M., & Ye, L. Z. (2019). The Immigrant Health Differential in the Context of Racial and Ethnic Disparities: The Case of Diabetes. *Advances in medical sociology, 19*: 147–171. <https://doi.org/10.1108/S1057-629020190000019008>
- Fineman, M. A. (2010). The Vulnerable Subject and the Responsive State. *Emory Law Journal, 60*(2). Available at: <https://scholarlycommons.law.emory.edu/elj/vol60/iss2/1>
- Fineman M. A. & Fineman J. W. (2018). Introducing vulnerability, In, Fineman MA (Ed), *Vulnerability and the Legal Organization of Work*. London, UK: Routledge

- Fineman, M. A. (2019). Vulnerability and Social Justice. *Valparaiso University Law Review*, 53(2): 341-369. Available at: <https://scholar.valpo.edu/vulr/vol53/iss2/2>
- Flood, S., King, M., Rodgers, R., Ruggles, S., & Warren, R. (2020). Integrated Public Use Microdata Series, Current Population Survey: Version 7.0 [dataset]. Minneapolis, MN: IPUMS. <https://doi.org/10.18128/D030.V7.0>
- Frye, R. (2020). Family Separation Under the Trump Administration: Applying an International Criminal Law Framework. *The Journal of Criminal Law and Criminology (1973-)*, 110(2), 349–377. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/48572373>
- Gany, F., Yogendran, L., Massie, D., Ramirez, J., Lee, T., Winkel, G., Leng, J. (2013). "Doctor, what do I have?" knowledge of cancer diagnosis among Immigrant/Migrant minorities. *Journal of Cancer Education*, 28(1), 165-70. <http://doi.org/10.1007/s13187-012-0429-x>
- Garcini, L. M., Domenech Rodríguez, M. M., Mercado, A., & Paris, M. (2020). A tale of two crises: The compounded effect of COVID-19 and anti-immigration policy in the United States. *Psychological Trauma: Theory, Research, Practice, and Policy*, 12(S1), S230–S232. <https://doi.org/10.1037/tra0000775>.
- Geertz, C. (1973). "Thick Description: Toward an Interpretive Theory of Culture." In *The Interpretation of Cultures: Selected Essays* (pp. 3-30). New York: Basic Books.
- Gil, R. M., Marcelin, J. R., Zuniga-Blanco, B., Marquez, C., Mathew, T., & Piggott, D. A. (2020). COVID-19 pandemic: Disparate health impact on the Hispanic/Latinx population in the United States. *Journal of Infectious Diseases*, 15(10): 1592–1595. <https://doi.org/10.1093/infdis/jiaa474>

- Gillborn, D. (2015). Intersectionality, Critical Race Theory, and the Primacy of Racism: Race, Class, Gender and Disability in Education. Vol. 21(3) 277–287.
[doi:10.1177/1077800414557827](https://doi.org/10.1177/1077800414557827)
- Giorgi, A. (2009). The descriptive phenomenological method in psychology: A modified Husserlian approach. Pittsburgh, PA: Duquesne University Press.
- Glaser, B. G., & Strauss, A. L. (1967). The Discovery of Grounded Theory: Strategies for Qualitative Research. New York: Aldine De Gruyter.
- Goetze, C. (2022). When the State Shatters Families. The US Family Separation Policy of 2018, Cruelty and Patrimonial Sovereignty, *Global Studies Quarterly*, 2(2).
<https://doi.org/10.1093/isagsq/ksab050>
- Gotanda, N. (1991). A Critique of “Our Constitution Is Color-Blind.” *Stanford Law Review*, 44(1), 1–68. <https://doi.org/10.2307/1228940>
- Gover, A. R., Harper, S. B., & Langton, L. (2020). Anti-Asian Hate Crime During the COVID-19 Pandemic: Exploring the Reproduction of Inequality. *American journal of criminal justice: AJCJ*, 45(4), 647–667.
<https://doi.org/10.1007/s12103-020-09545-1>
- Grunewald, R. & Nath, A. (2019). A Statewide Crisis: Minnesota’s Education Achievement Gaps. Retrieved From <https://www.minneapolisfed.org/-/media/assets/pages/education-achievement-gaps/achievement-gaps-mn-report.pdf>. (Accessed July 10, 2022).

- Guchteneire, P., Koenig, M., Touzenis, K., Cholewinski, R. (2009). The Human Rights of Migrants, *International Journal on Multicultural Societies*, 11(1).
<https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000183859>.
- Hamidi, E. (2020). Institutional Challenges and Political Costs in the US Failure to Ratify the ICESCR. *Berkeley Undergraduate Journal*, 34(1).
<https://doi.org/10.5070/B3341048896>.
- Haney, L. (1996). *White by law: The legal construction of race*, New York: New York University Press.
- Hagar, E., Chloe, B., Muzna, A., Claudia, R., Nazmun, R., Sawsan, A., Patrick, K., Joyce, W., & Zahid, C. (2022). Reducing Vulnerability to Forced Labor and Trafficking of Women Migrant Workers from South- to West-Asia, *Development in Practice*. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09614524.2022.2059448>
- Heidegger, M. (1927). *Being and Time*. (J. Macquarrie & E. Robinson, Trans.). Harper & Row. (Original work published 1927).
- Helms, J. E. (1995). An update of Helms's White and people of color racial identity models. In Ponterotto, J. G., Casas, J. M., Suzuki, L. A., Alexander, D. M. (Eds.), *Handbook of multicultural counseling* (pp. 181-198). Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE.
- Hernandez, D. & Charney, E. (1998). "From generation to generation: the health and well-being of children in immigrant families", National Academy Press, Washington DC.

- Hing, B.O. (1997). *To be an American: Cultural pluralism and the rhetoric of assimilation*, New York: New York University Press.
- Hirsh, E., & Lyons, C. J. (2010). Perceiving discrimination on the job: Legal consciousness, workplace context, and the construction of race discrimination. *Law & Society Review*, 44(2): 269-298. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1540-5893.2010.00403.x>.
- Hirschman C. (2014). Immigration to the United States: Recent Trends and Future Prospects. *Malaysian journal of economic studies: journal of the Malaysian Economic Association and the Faculty of Economics and Administration, University of Malaya*, 51(1), 69–85. Retrieved from <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4302270/>
- Hofstetter, J. & McHugh, M. (2021). Minnesota’s Immigrant and U.S.-Born Parents of Young and Elementary-School-Age Children: Key Sociodemographic Characteristics. Washington, DC: Migration Policy Institute.
- Holmes, S. M. (2011). Structural vulnerability and hierarchies of ethnicity and citizenship on the farm. *Medical anthropology*, 30(4): 425-449. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01459740.2011.576728>.
- Horner, K.M., Wrigley-Field, E. & Leider, J.P. (2022). A First Look: Disparities in COVID-19 Mortality Among US-Born and Foreign-Born Minnesota Residents. *Popul Res Policy Rev* 41, 465–478. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11113-021-09668-1>

- Husserl, E. (1931). *Ideas: General Introduction to Pure Phenomenology*. (W. R. Boyce Gibson, Trans.). George Allen & Unwin. (Original work published 1913).
- Husserl, E. (1936). *The Crisis of European Sciences and Transcendental Phenomenology: An Introduction to Phenomenological Philosophy*. (D. Carr, Trans.). Northwestern University Press.
- Johnson, K. (2004). *The “huddled masses” myth: Immigration and civil rights*, Philadelphia: Temple University Press.
- Johnson, K. (1996). “Aliens” and the U.S. immigration laws: The social and legal construction of nonpersons. *University of Miami International-American Law Review*, 28(2): 263–292.
- Jones C. P. (2000). Levels of racism: a theoretic framework and a gardener's tale. *American Journal of Public Health*, 90(8): 1212–1215.
<https://doi.org/10.2105/ajph.90.8.1212>
- Kabasakal Arat, Z.F. (2006). Forging A Global Culture of Human Rights: Origins and Prospects of the International Bill of Rights. *Human Rights Quarterly* 28(2), 416-437. <https://doi.org/10.1353/hrq.2006.0014>.
- Karger, H. J. & Stoesz, D. (2014). *American social welfare policy: A pluralist approach*. (7th ed.) Boston, MA: Pearson.
- King N. (2004). Using templates in the thematic analysis of text. In Cassell C., Symon G. (Eds.), *Essential guide to qualitative methods in organizational research*, (pp. 257–270). London, UK: Sage.

- Kishi, K. (2017, November 15). Assaults against Muslims in U.S. surpass 2001 level. Retrieved from <https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2017/11/15/assaults-against-muslims-in-u-s-surpass-2001-level/>
- Kohn, N. A. (2014). Vulnerability Theory and the Role of Government. *Yale Journal of Law & Feminism*, 26(1). Available at SSRN: <https://ssrn.com/abstract=2562737>
- Koumpilova, M. (2016, August 7). Donald Trump's comments about Minnesota Somalis met with outrage: Trump called state a terror recruitment hotbed. *Star Tribune*. Retrieved from: <http://www.startribune.com/donald-trump-s-swipe-at-minnesota-somalis-met-with-outrage/389353501/>.
- Krouwel, M., Jolly, K. & Greenfield, S. (2019). Comparing Skype (Video Calling) and In-Person Qualitative Interview Modes in a Study of People with Irritable Bowel Syndrome – An Exploratory Comparative Analysis. *BMC Medical Research Methodology* 219(19). <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12874-019-0867-9>
- Kysel, I. (2016). Promoting the Recognition and Protection of the Rights of All Migrants Using a Soft-Law International Migrants Bill of Rights. *Journal on Migration and Human Security*, 4(2): 29-44. <https://doi.org/10.1177/233150241600400201>.
- Lambert, S. D., & Loisel, C. G. (2008). Combining individual interviews and focus groups to enhance data richness. *Journal of advanced nursing*, 62(2), 228–237. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1365-2648.2007.04559.x>
- Leibert, A. (2018). College Has Value Even for Non-completers. Retrieved from https://mn.gov/deed/assets/college%20has%20value_tcm1045-336259.pdf (Accessed July 9, 2022).

- Libal, K., Harding, S., Popescu, M., Berthold, M. & Felten, G (2021). Human Rights of Forced Migrants During the COVID-19 Pandemic: An Opportunity for Mobilization and Solidarity. *Journal of Human Rights and Social Work*, 6(4): 148–160. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s41134-021-00162-4>
- Lincoln, A. K., Cardeli, E., Sideridis, G., Salhi, C., Miller, A. B., Da Fonseca, T., Issa, O., & Ellis, B. H. (2021). Discrimination, marginalization, belonging, and mental health among Somali immigrants in North America. *American Journal of Orthopsychiatry*, 91(2), 280–293. <https://doi.org/10.1037/ort0000524>
- Lougarre, C. (2020). The Protection of Non-nationals' Economic, Social and Cultural Rights in un–Human Rights Treaties, *International Human Rights Law Review*, 9(2), 252-290. <https://doi.org/10.1163/22131035-00902008>
- Manisuli, S. (2011). Reflections on state obligations with respect to economic, social and cultural rights in international human rights law, *The International Journal of Human Rights*, 15(6), 969-1012. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13642981003719158>
- Mapp, S., McPherson, J., Androff, D., & Gatenio Gabel, S. (2019). Social work is a human rights profession. *Social Work*, 64(3): 259-269. <https://doi.org/10.1093/sw/swz023>.
- Massey, D. S., & Malone, N. (2002). Pathways to legal immigration. *Population research and policy review*, 21(6), 473–504. <https://doi.org/10.1023/A:1022914700681>
- MartinRogers, N., Evans, R., & Mattessich, P. (2016). Foundation Support of Immigrant Communities: Insights From a Survey of Immigrants in Minnesota's Twin Cities. *The Foundation Review*, 8(3). <https://doi.org/10.9707/1944-5660.1312>

McGuire, K. (n.d.). Immigration Detention, Removal Defense, and the Pandemic,

Hennepin County Bar Association. Retrieved from:

<https://www.mnbar.org/hennepin-county-bar-association/resources/hennepin-lawyer/articles/2021/02/26/immigration-detention-removal-defense-and-the-pandemic>.

Menjívar, C., Simmons, W., Alvord, D., & Salerno Valdez, E. (2018). Immigration Enforcement, The Racialization of Legal Status, And Perceptions of The Police: Latinos in Chicago, Los Angeles, Houston, and Phoenix in Comparative Perspective. *Du Bois Review: Social Science Research on Race*, 15(1), 107-128. doi:10.1017/S1742058X18000115.

Merriam-Webster.com Dictionary, “The American dream,” Accessed February 10, 2021.

<https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/the%20American%20dream>.

Miranda, A., & Zhu, Y. (2013). English deficiency and the native–immigrant wage gap. *Economics Letters*, 118(1), 38-41.

<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.econlet.2012.09.007>

MNopedia. (2016). Minnesotanos: How Latinos have shaped the State. Latino journeys in Minnesota. Retrieved from <http://www.mnopedia.org/minnesotanos-latino-journeysminnesota>.

Moon, K., Brewer, T. D., Januchowski-Hartley, S. R., Adams, V. M., & Blackman, D. A. (2016). A guideline to improve qualitative social science publishing in ecology and conservation journals. *Ecology and Society* 21(3):17.

<http://dx.doi.org/10.5751/ES-08663-210317>.

Muramatsu, N., & Chin, M. H. (2022). Battling Structural Racism Against Asians in the United States: Call for Public Health to Make the "Invisible" Visible. *Journal of public health management and practice: JPHMP*, 28(Suppl 1), S3–S8.

<https://doi.org/10.1097/PHH.0000000000001411>.

Murphy, C. (2013). The Enduring Vulnerability of Migrant Domestic Workers in Europe. *The International and Comparative Law Quarterly*, 62(3), 599–627.

<http://www.jstor.org/stable/43301580>.

Nan, C. J., & Nan, C. J. (1994). Adding Salt to the Wound: Affirmative Action and Critical Race Theory Adding Salt to the Wound : Affirmative Action and Critical Race Theory. 12(2).

National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine. (2015). The Integration of Immigrants into American Society. Washington, DC: The National Academies Press. <https://doi.org/10.17226/21746>.

National Immigration Law Center. (2022). Issues Affecting Immigrants' Access to Health Care and Education. Retrieved from <https://www.nilc.org/news/special-reports/a-decade-of-state-immigrant-rights-victories-moving-toward-health-care-and-economic-justice-for-all/> (Accessed October 12, 2023).

Neubauer, B. E., Witkop, C. T., & Varpio, L. (2019). How phenomenology can help us learn from the experiences of others. *Perspectives on medical education*, 8(2), 90–97. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s40037-019-0509-2>.

- Nowell, L. S., Norris, J. M., White, D. E., & Moules, N. J. (2017). Thematic Analysis: Striving to Meet the Trustworthiness Criteria. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, 16(1). <https://doi.org/10.1177/1609406917733847>
- Nussbaum, MC. (2011). *Creating Capabilities: The Human Development Approach*. Cambridge, MA: The Belknap Press: Harvard University Press.
- O'Brien, B. G., Collingwood, L. & El-Khatib, S. O. (2019). The Politics of Refugee Sanctuary Cities, Crime, and Undocumented Immigration, *Urban Affairs Review*, 55(1), 3-40. <http://doi.org/10.1177/1078087417704974>.
- Okonkwo, N. E., Aguwa, U. T., Jang, M., Barre, I. A., Page, K. R., Sullivan, P. S., Chris, B., & Stefan, B. (2021). COVID-19 and the US response: Accelerating health inequities. *BMJ Evidence-Based Medicine*, 26(4): 176-179. <https://doi.org/10.1136/bmjebm-2020-111426>
- Onwuegbuzie, A. J., & Leech, N. L. (2007). Sampling designs in qualitative research: Making the sampling process more public. *Qualitative Report*, 12(2), 238-254. <http://doi.org/10.46743/2160-3715/2007.1636>.
- Pager, D., Bonikowski, B., & Western, B. (2009). Discrimination in a Low-Wage Labor Market: A Field Experiment. *American Sociological Review*, 74(5), 777–799. <https://doi.org/10.1177/000312240907400505>
- Palinkas, L. A., Horwitz, S. M., Green, C. A., Wisdom, J. P., Duan, N., & Hoagwood, K. (2015). Purposeful Sampling for Qualitative Data Collection and Analysis in Mixed Method Implementation Research. *Administration and policy in mental health*, 42(5), 533–544. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10488-013-0528-y>

- Pandey, S. K., Cantor, J. C., & Lloyd, K. (2014). Immigrant Health Care Access and the Affordable Care Act. *Public Administration Review*, 74(6), 749–759.
<http://www.jstor.org/stable/24029499>
- Patler, C., & Golash-Boza, T. M. (2017). The fiscal and human costs of immigrant detention and deportation in the United States. *Sociology Compass*, 11(11), e12536. <https://doi.org/10.1111/soc4.12536>.
- Patler, C., Hamilton, E., Meagher, K. & Savinar, R. (2019). Uncertainty About DACA May Undermine Its Positive Impact On Health For Recipients And Their Children, *Health Affairs*, 38(5). <https://doi.org/10.1377/hlthaff.2018.05495>
- Polit, D., Beck, F., & Hungler, B. P. (2006). Essentials of nursing research: methods, appraisal, and utilization. Lippincott, N.Y: New York, USA.
- Quesada, J., Hart, L. K., & Bourgois, P. (2011). Structural vulnerability and health: Latino migrant laborers in the United States. *Medical anthropology*, 30(4), 339–362. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01459740.2011.576725>
- Quintavalla, A., & Heine, K. (2019). Priorities and human rights. *The International Journal of Human Rights*, 23(4), 679-697.
- Ritchie, M.J., Drummond, K.L., Smith, B.N., Sullivan, J.L., & Landes, S.J. (2022). Development of a qualitative data analysis codebook informed by the i-PARIHS framework. *Implementation Science Communications* 98(3).
<https://doi.org/10.1186/s43058-022-00344-9>.
- Rodriguez, C. (2021). Reading Regents and the Political Significance of Law, *The University of Chicago Press Journal*. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1086/715475>

- Roethke, L. (2007). *Latino Minnesota*. Afton, MN: Afton Historical Society Press.
- Rolnick, A.J., & Grunewald, R. (2003). Early Childhood Development: Economic Development with a High Public Return. Available at: <https://www.minneapolisfed.org/article/2020/people-of-color-face-systemic-disparities-in-minnesotas-labor-market> (Accessed July 20, 2022).
- Rubio-Hernandez, S. P. & Ayon, C. (2016) Pobrecitos los niños: The emotional impact of anti-immigration policies on latino children. *Children and Youth Services Review*, 60, 20-26. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.childyouth.2015.11.013>
- Roulston, K. (2011). Working through challenges in doing interview research. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, 348–366. <https://doi.org/10.1177/160940691101000404>
- Sarrett, J. C. (2021). A vulnerability inspired Universal Design of Justice. *Punishment & Society*. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1462474521989806>
- Schmidt, P. W. (2019). An Overview and Critique of US Immigration and Asylum Policies in the Trump Era. *Journal on Migration and Human Security*, 7(3), 92–102. <https://doi.org/10.1177/2331502419866203>
- Smit, B., & Scherman, V. (2021). Computer-Assisted Qualitative Data Analysis Software for Scoping Reviews: A Case of ATLAS.ti. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, 20. <https://doi.org/10.1177/16094069211019140>.
- Smith, J. A., Flowers, P., & Larkin, M. (2009). *Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis: Theory, Method, and Research*. London: SAGE Publications.

- Strauss, P. L. (2019). The Trump Administration and the Rule of Law, *Revue Française D'administration Publique, Columbia Public Law Research* 650(14): 433-446.
<http://dx.doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.3491383>
- Sundler, A. J., Lindberg, E., Nilsson, C., & Palmér, L. (2019). Qualitative thematic analysis based on descriptive phenomenology. *Nursing open*, 6(3), 733–739.
<https://doi.org/10.1002/nop2.275>
- Swartz, T. T., Hartmann, D., & Vue, P. L. (2021). Race, ethnicity, and the incorporation experiences of Hmong American young adults: insights from a mixed-method, longitudinal study. *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, 45(7), 1197-1217. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01419870.2021.1939091>.
- Szaflarski, M., & Bauldry, S. (2019). The Effects of Perceived Discrimination on Immigrant and Refugee Physical and Mental Health. *Advances in medical sociology*, 19, 173–204. <https://doi.org/10.1108/S1057-629020190000019009>
- The Geneva Convention, 1951 (n.d.). Retrieved from <https://www.unhcr.org/en-us/3b66c2aa10>
- Timmer, A., Baumgärtel, M., Kotzé, L., & Slingenberg, L. (2021). The potential and pitfalls of the vulnerability concept for human rights. *Netherlands Quarterly of Human Rights*, 39(3), 190–197. <https://doi.org/10.1177/092405192111048009>
- Timothy M. S. (2016). Multiple Barriers to Economic Opportunity for the “Truly” Disadvantaged and Vulnerable. *RSF: The Russell Sage Foundation Journal of the Social Sciences*, 2(2), 98–122. <https://doi.org/10.7758/rsf.2016.2.2.04>

- Tomaszewski, L. E., Zarestky, J., & Gonzalez, E. (2020). Planning Qualitative Research: Design and Decision Making for New Researchers. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1609406920967174>
- Tsuchiya K, Toles O, Levesque C, Horner K, Ryu E, Chan, L. & DeWaard, J. (2021) Perceived Structural Vulnerabilities Among Detained Noncitizen Immigrants in Minnesota. *PLOS ONE* 16(6): e0252232. <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0252232>.
- UN Treaty Collections. (n.d.). Available at: https://treaties.un.org/Pages/ViewDetails.aspx?src=IND&mtdsg_no=IV-3&chapter=4. (Accessed on July 11, 2022).
- United Nations. (n.d.). Human Rights. Available at: <https://www.un.org/en/global-issues/human-rights>. (Accessed on October 20, 2022).
- United Nations. (1993). Vienna Declaration and Program of Action. Retrieved from: <https://www.ohchr.org/en/instruments-mechanisms/instruments/vienna-declaration-and-programme-action>. (Accessed on May 10, 2022).
- United Nations (UN). (1967). *Protocol Relating to the Status of Refugees*. United Nations General Assembly. <https://www.unhcr.org/en-us/protection/basic/3b66c2aa10/convention-protocol-relating-status-refugees.html>
- United Nations (UN). (1951). *Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees*. United Nations General Assembly. <https://www.unhcr.org/en-us/3b66c2aa10>

- United States Bureau of Labor Statistics. (2020). Labor force characteristics of foreign-born workers news release. Retrieved from <https://www.bls.gov/news.release/forbrn.htm>
- van Gelder, N., Peterman, A., Potts, A., O'Donnell, M., Thompson, K., Shah, N., & Oertelt-Prigione, S. (2020). COVID-19: Reducing the risk of infection might increase the risk of intimate partner violence. *EClinicalMedicine*, 21, 1–2. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.eclinm.2020.100348>
- Wasem, R. E. (2020). More than a Wall: The Rise and Fall of US Asylum and Refugee Policy. *Journal on Migration and Human Security*, 8(3), 246–265. <https://doi.org/10.1177/2331502420948847>
- Webb, H. M., Nápoles, A. M., Pérez-Stable, E. J. (2020). COVID-19 and Racial/Ethnic Disparities. *JAMA Network*, 323(24): 2466–2467. <http://doi.org/10.1001/jama.2020.8598>
- Wiebe, V. (2017). Immigration Federalism in Minnesota: What Does Sanctuary Mean in Practice? *University of St. Thomas Law Journal*, 13(3), 581-641.
- Willen, S. S., Knipper, M., Abadía-Barrero, C. E., & Davidovitch, N. (2017). Syndemic vulnerability and the right to health. *The Lancet*, 389(10072): 964-977. [https://doi.org/10.1016/S0140-6736\(17\)30261-1](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0140-6736(17)30261-1).
- Wilson, F. A., Stimpson, J. P. (2020). Federal and State Policies Affecting Immigrant Access to Healthcare. *JAMA Health Forum*, 1(4). <http://doi.org/10.1001/jamahealthforum.2020.0271>.

- _____. (2020). US Policies Increase Vulnerability of Immigrant Communities to the COVID-19 Pandemic. *Annals of global health*, 86(1), 57. <https://doi.org/10.5334/aogh.2897>
- Wood L. (2018). Impact of punitive immigration policies, parent-child separation and child detention on the mental health and development of children. *BMJ Paediatrics Open*, 2(1), e000338. <https://doi.org/10.1136/bmjpo-2018-000338>
- Xiong, S., Goldenrod, C. & Szczepanski, C. (n.d). Key Housing Issues Facing Immigrant Communities in the Twin Cities. Retrieved from <https://www.mhponline.org/images/Immigrant-research-final.pdf>
- Yasenov, V. I., Lawrence, D., Mendoza, F. S., Hainmueller, J. (2020). Public Health Insurance Expansion for Immigrant Children and Interstate Migration of Low-Income Immigrants. *JAMA Pediatric*. 174(1): 22–28. <https://doi.org/10.1001/jamapediatrics.2019.4241>.
- Yoshikawa, H., Wuermli, A. J., Britto, P. R., Dreyer, B., Leckman, J. F., Lye, S. J., ... & Stein, A. (2020). Effects of the global coronavirus disease-2019 pandemic on early childhood development: short-and long-term risks and mitigating program and policy actions. *The Journal of pediatrics*, 223, 188-193. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jpeds.2020.05.020>.

Appendix A: Codebook

THE CODEBOOK - HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS AGAINST LEGAL IMMIGRANTS IN MINNESOTA					
Themes	Subthemes	Emergent Themes in Light of Fineman's Vulnerability Dimensions	Categories	Codes	Direct Quotes
Experiences of Educational Discrimination	Difficulty Accessing Quality Education	<p>Constant Vulnerability: Ongoing challenges in accessing education.</p> <p>Particular Vulnerability: Specific barriers to particular immigrant groups related to language and cultural differences.</p> <p>Universal Vulnerability: Access to education is a widespread issue for immigrants.</p> <p>Complex Vulnerability: Intersecting factors like language, culture, systemic, socio-economic status, and legal status complicate access.</p>	Educational Access and Quality	Language barriers, lack of access to quality education, disparities in healthcare and educational outcomes, psychological impact of deportation threats on academic performance	<p>Participant 3: "Among immigrants, on the other hand, often experience barriers to accessing education and healthcare due to language and cultural differences. They also face racial profiling and discrimination, which can impact their sense of security and belonging."</p> <p>Participant 2: "Access to education is another major concern. Many of the children of these immigrants are US citizens, and they face daily challenges due to the deportation threats or the fear of being separated from their parents. This affects their academic performance, and</p>

				<p>I've seen some children struggle with school as a result."</p> <p>Participant 2: "They (immigrants) may lack access to affordable healthcare and quality education for their children, which further adds to their vulnerabilities."</p> <p>Participant 1: "Additionally, legal immigrants from Mexico, Somalia, and the Hmong community might also encounter difficulties in accessing healthcare and education, which are fundamental human rights. The disparities in healthcare and educational outcomes can have long-term negative effects on their well-being."</p> <p>Participant 4: "Legal immigrants often encounter hurdles in accessing healthcare, education, and legal representation."</p>
--	--	--	--	---

	Harassment and Bullying in School	<p>Constant Vulnerability: Persistent risk of bullying based on ethnicity or immigrant status.</p> <p>Particular Vulnerability: Specific forms of bullying for particular immigrant groups related to cultural or linguistic differences.</p> <p>Universal Vulnerability: Bullying is a universal experience that can affect all immigrants.</p> <p>Complex Vulnerability: The impact of bullying is complex, affecting psychological, academic, and social dimensions.</p>	School Environment and Safety	Discrimination based on appearance, bullying, impact on mental health and academic performance	<p>Participant 5: "As for Hmong immigrants, there have been cases of educational discrimination. Their children sometimes face bullying and discrimination in schools, which can have long-lasting effects on their academic and emotional well-being."</p> <p>FGD Hmong H4: "My daughter faced discrimination at school. She was teased for being different, and the school didn't take it seriously. It took a toll on her self-esteem, and she struggled academically."</p>
--	-----------------------------------	---	-------------------------------	--	--

Experiences of Workplace Discrimination	Experiences of being denied employment or promotion opportunities on the basis of ethnic background	<p>Constant Vulnerability: Ongoing discrimination in employment practices.</p> <p>Particular Vulnerability: Discrimination based on qualifications, accent, legal status, or ethnic background.</p> <p>Universal Vulnerability: Workplace discrimination affects immigrants across various sectors.</p> <p>Complex Vulnerability: Intersection with legal status, language proficiency, and recognition of foreign credentials.</p>	Employment Discrimination	Qualifications overlooked, ethnic discrimination in job promotions and hiring, preference of non-immigrant employees	<p>Participant 3: "It's essential for us to raise awareness about these violations and work towards policy changes and community education to ensure that legal immigrants from these backgrounds are treated fairly and afforded the human rights and dignity they deserve."</p> <p>FGD Mexicans Participant 3 (M3): "(Sighs) I've faced a few challenges, especially when trying to find a job. I feel like some employers prefer not to hire immigrants. It's frustrating."</p> <p>FGD Somali S2: "I agree with S1. While Minnesota is generally accepting, I've also faced workplace discrimination. It's subtle but pervasive, like being passed over for promotions or being given less desirable cases to work on."</p> <p>FGD Somali S1: "One incident that stands out is when my friend was denied a job</p>
---	---	---	---------------------------	--	---

				<p>opportunity solely because of his Somali background. He was qualified and had a great resume, but the employer flat-out told him they didn't want any Somalis working there. It affected his self-esteem and made him feel unwelcome in this community."</p> <p>FGD Somali S4: "Personally, I've faced discrimination while job hunting. My qualifications were often dismissed because of my name, and I received fewer callbacks than my non-Somali counterparts. It's frustrating and demoralizing."</p> <p>FGD Somali S4: "I've encountered workplace discrimination too, where I feel like I'm not given the same opportunities as my American-born colleagues."</p> <p>FGD Hmong H3: "(Sighs) I've been turned down for jobs despite being qualified, and I couldn't help but wonder if it had to</p>
--	--	--	--	---

					<p>do with my ethnicity."</p> <p>Participant 4: "Somali immigrants may face discrimination due to their religion, language, and culture, and they've also experienced challenges related to counterterrorism policies."</p> <p>Participant 1: "The Somali immigrants often experience discrimination in various forms. Some face barriers in employment opportunities due to their names or religious attire, and there have been instances of bullying and harassment in schools."</p>
--	--	--	--	--	---

	Experiences of Discrimination Related with Wage Disparities	<p>Constant Vulnerability: Continual wage disparities for immigrant workers.</p> <p>Particular Vulnerability: Wage theft or unfair wages at certain employers based on immigrant status.</p> <p>Universal Vulnerability: Wage inequality is a broad issue impacting many immigrants.</p> <p>Complex Vulnerability: Factors like visa status, lack of legal knowledge, and exploitative employment practices.</p>	Wage Inequality	Unfair wages, wage theft, exploitation due to immigration status, labor rights violations	<p>Participant 5: “In the case of Somali immigrants, there have been instances of employment discrimination, where they are often paid significantly less than their non-immigrant counterparts for similar work. This not only affects their economic well-being but also their ability to access basic necessities.”</p> <p>FGD Mexicans (M4): (Nods in agreement) “I’ve noticed that too. And sometimes, even when you get the job, you’re paid less than others doing the same work.”</p> <p>FGD Mexicans M2: (Sighs, looking frustrated) “Yes, wage theft is a big problem. Some employers pay us less than what we’re owed, but we often don’t know how to address it within the legal system.”</p> <p>FGD Mexicans M2: [Nods sadly] “Yes, that’s true. And there have been instances where employers</p>
--	---	--	-----------------	---	---

				<p>take advantage of our immigration status, paying us less than minimum wage, and not providing safe working conditions.”</p> <p>FGD Hmong H1: “Yes, I have faced some issues. My husband, who works in construction, was once denied fair wages by his employer because he knew they thought he couldn't complain due to our immigrant status. This affected our family income, making it harder to provide for our children.”</p> <p>Participant 3: “They may face wage theft or workplace exploitation due to their immigration status.” (expression becomes more animated)</p> <p>Participant 5: “For Mexican immigrants, one common issue is labor rights violations, especially in industries like agriculture and construction. These individuals</p>
--	--	--	--	--

					often face substandard working conditions, wage theft, and even discrimination due to their immigration status. On top of that, there can be instances of racial profiling and harassment by law enforcement agencies, which intersect with immigration status issues.
General Experiences of Workplace Discrimination	<p>Constant Vulnerability: Being denied employment opportunities due to ethnic background and immigration status. Particular Vulnerability: Workplace marginalization experienced by certain immigrants. Universal Vulnerability: Individuals from various ethnic backgrounds—Hmong, Mexican, and Somali—report similar challenges. Complex</p>	Workplace Culture and Discrimination	Harassment, assignment of difficult tasks, derogatory remarks, lack of opportunity	<p>Participant 3: “Somali community, I've seen cases of employment discrimination, where individuals with valid work permits and qualifications have been denied job opportunities solely due to their ethnic background or the way they express their religious beliefs.” Participant 4: “Discrimination remains a significant issue. Members of these communities face systemic biases in employment, housing, and education. I've seen cases where</p>	

		<p>Vulnerability: Workplace discrimination against immigrants is not merely about individual prejudice but is entangled with systemic issues such as the non-recognition of foreign credentials, economic exploitation, and legal inadequacies that fail to protect against discrimination.</p>		<p>legal immigrants are denied job opportunities because of their ethnicity or have difficulties renting homes due to discriminatory practices. These actions not only affect their economic well-being but also their psychological and emotional state.”FGD Somali S1: “Well, I haven't faced any major violations, but there are instances of discrimination, especially in the workplace. It's subtle, but it's there.” FGD Somali S1: (Nervously fidgeting with hands) “Yes, I reported an incident involving a coworker. They were constantly making derogatory remarks about my background. It was tough, but I had to speak up.” (Furrows brows)FGD Hmong H1: (leaning forward) “I faced discrimination at work once, but I reported it, and it</p>
--	--	--	--	---

					<p>was resolved. So, sometimes, it's about standing up for your rights."</p> <p>FGD Hmong H2: "I faced discrimination at work too. My boss used to make fun of my accent and assign me more difficult tasks, saying I needed to "prove myself." It made me feel small and powerless."</p> <p>Participant 1: "Historically, many Mexican immigrants in Minnesota faced employment discrimination, exploitation, and racial profiling. The economic factors have perpetuated this, as many of them are pushed into low-wage jobs with little job security, which can lead to wage theft, unsafe working conditions, and limited access to healthcare"</p> <p>Participant 2: "Mexican immigrants in Minnesota, and some common issues have come up over the years. One of the most prevalent is workplace exploitation.</p>
--	--	--	--	--	---

					<p>Many Mexican immigrants work in low-paying jobs, often facing wage theft, unsafe working conditions, and unjust firings.”</p> <p>Participant 4: “The workplace is another area of concern. Legal immigrants are sometimes subjected to unfair labor practices, including wage theft, dangerous working conditions, or even harassment. Their fear of retaliation or deportation often prevents them from reporting these abuses.”</p>
--	--	--	--	--	---

<p>Experiences of Racial Profiling and Negative Stereotyping</p>		<p>Constant Vulnerability: The perpetual risk of being stereotyped or racially profiled</p> <p>Particular Vulnerability: Specific groups, such as Somali immigrants and Mexicans, experience targeted profiling and stereotyping based on their legal status, culture, and ethnicity.</p> <p>Universal Vulnerability: Legal immigrant communities face systemic challenges that underscore the universal aspect of vulnerability.</p> <p>Complex Vulnerability: The interplay between societal biases, media portrayal, and law enforcement practices contributes to a complex web of vulnerability.</p>	<p>Societal Bias and Law Enforcement</p>	<p>Negative stereotyping, bias in media, Islamophobia, government policies leading to stereotyping, racial profiling by police, unwarranted stops and searches</p>	<p>FGD Somali S3: “It’s also important for the media to show a more balanced view of our community. Highlight our successes and contributions, not just the negatives.”</p> <p>FGD Somali S5: “I’ve been here a long time, and I’ve seen progress, but I’ve also witnessed some disturbing incidents. I remember the aftermath of the police shooting of a Somali man in our community a few years ago. It was heartbreaking to see the injustices play out.”</p> <p>FGD Somali S3: “Yes, and it’s not just about individuals. Sometimes, I think the media plays a role in shaping perceptions. We see stories that focus on the negative aspects of our community, which can reinforce stereotypes.”</p> <p>Participant 1: “In the Somali community, I</p>
--	--	--	--	--	--

				<p>represented a family who had their car vandalized with hateful slurs, and their children were bullied at school because of their religion. It was heartbreaking to see the children's fear and the family's struggle to feel safe in their own community.”</p> <p>Participant 5: “Moreover, there have been cases where the government's counterterrorism efforts have unfairly targeted Somali immigrants, leading to civil liberties violations and increased surveillance.” [This applies mainly to Somali immigrants].</p> <p>Participant 2: “Many Somali legal immigrants have faced discrimination in employment and housing, often due to their religion or ethnicity. They may encounter xenophobia, Islamophobia, or be subjected to racial profiling.</p>
--	--	--	--	--

				<p>These human rights violations affect their ability to live, work, and integrate into society as full and equal members.”</p> <p>Participant 2: “Legal immigrants in these communities are often afraid to step out of their homes, fearing racial profiling, harassment, or unjust deportation.</p> <p>Participant 3: “There have been cases of racial profiling and harassment by law enforcement, which infringe on their rights to security and freedom from discrimination. FGD Mexicans M5: (Looks distressed) “Being racially profiled by the police was a humiliating experience. It made me question my place in this society.”</p> <p>FGD Mexicans M2: (Tightens fists) “Yes, I've had a few encounters with the police that left me feeling targeted. Once, I was pulled over for a minor traffic</p>
--	--	--	--	---

					<p>violation, and they asked about my immigration status instead of just giving me a ticket.”</p> <p>FGD Mexicans M5: (Sighs) “I faced racial profiling by the police, even though I'm a legal resident. They pulled me over without reason and questioned my status, making me feel like a criminal.”</p> <p>FGD Mexicans M3: (Appears frustrated) “Yes, I reported a case of racial profiling. The police just brushed it off like it wasn't a big deal. They didn't take me seriously.”</p>
Experiences of Housing Discrimination	General Experiences of Housing Discrimination	<p>Constant Vulnerability: The continuous challenge of securing housing due to discrimination.</p> <p>Particular Vulnerability: Immigrants face particular vulnerabilities with Landlords based on their ethnicity or immigrant status.</p> <p>Universal</p>	Housing Access and Discrimination	Denial of housing based on ethnicity, landlords' negative attitudes towards immigrants	<p>FGD Mexicans M3: (Raises eyebrows in frustration) “I once applied for a housing rental, and they asked me so many questions about my legal status that I felt like they were trying to find a reason not to rent to me.”</p> <p>FGD Somali S3: “I faced some issues with housing</p>

		<p>Vulnerability: Housing discrimination is a widespread issue that affects various immigrant communities.</p> <p>Complex Vulnerability: Housing discrimination encompasses not only denial of housing but also differential treatment in terms of maintenance and relations with landlords.</p>			<p>discrimination when I first moved here. It was difficult to find a place to rent because some landlords didn't want to rent to Somali immigrants.”</p> <p>FGD Hmong H2: (with frustration) “I remember being denied housing once because of my ethnicity. That hurt a lot.”</p> <p>FGD Somali S4: (Leaning forward with passion) “Yes, I reported a landlord who refused to fix a leaky roof in winter. It took a while, but eventually, a housing rights organization helped me.” (Smiles with relief).</p>
Landlords Charging Immigrants Disproportionately Higher Rent Charges or Neglecting Maintenance	<p>Constant Vulnerability: The continuous challenge of no maintenance and higher rents.</p> <p>Particular Vulnerability: Each group faces discrimination not just on the basis of being immigrants but also due to specific racial,</p>	Housing Quality and Fairness	Overcharging rent, neglecting maintenance , exploitation by landlords	<p>FGD Mexicans M4: (Bites lip) “I've seen how some landlords discriminate against immigrants. They charge higher rent or neglect maintenance, and they don't care because they think we won't complain.”</p> <p>FGD Mexicans M1: (Furrows brow) “Well,</p>	

		<p>ethnic, and cultural factors.</p> <p>Universal Vulnerability: Housing discrimination is not an isolated issue affecting only specific immigrant communities. It is a widespread problem that impacts many immigrants in Minnesota.</p> <p>Complex Vulnerability: Housing discrimination encompasses not only denial of housing but also differential treatment in terms of maintenance and relations with landlords.</p>		<p>sometimes landlords take advantage of us by not maintaining our housing properly. It's difficult to assert our rights because of fear of retaliation or eviction.”</p> <p>FGD Mexicans M5: (Appears angry) “I reported a landlord who was overcharging me for rent and refusing to fix things in my apartment. They just told me to find a new place if I didn't like it. It was infuriating.”</p> <p>FGD Somali S4: “My family and I have faced some discrimination in housing. Landlords sometimes charge higher rents or make it difficult for us to rent, even though we have good credit and legal status. It's frustrating.”</p> <p>Participant 3: “Hmong community, there have been instances where individuals have faced housing discrimination, with landlords refusing to rent to them or</p>
--	--	---	--	--

					demanding exorbitant deposits because of their ethnicity. It's heartbreaking to see families struggling to secure safe and affordable housing.”
	Experiences of Harassment, Humiliation, and Unfair Treatment from Landlords and Neighbors		Neighbor and Landlord Relations	Harassment and racism from neighbors, differential treatment by landlords, cultural insensitivity	<p>FGD Mexicans M5: (Looks down, voice trembling) “I've experienced some blatant racism here. People have yelled slurs at me and my family. It's terrifying, and it makes me feel like I don't belong.”</p> <p>FGD Mexicans M4: (Expresses frustration) “I felt humiliated by my landlord's behavior. It affects your sense of belonging when you're treated differently.”</p> <p>FGD Somali S2: “I remember when a neighbor of mine was harassed by her landlord because she wore a hijab. He would make insensitive comments and</p>

				<p>sometimes even entered her apartment without notice. She lived in constant fear, and it took a toll on her mental health.” FGD Hmong H1: (Leans forward, fingers intertwined nervously) “Yes, I did report a case once. It was about my neighbor who was harassing my family because of our ethnicity. I reported it to the local police.” FGD Hmong H4: (Bites lip) “I had a neighbor who constantly made insensitive remarks about our culture, and it made me feel unwelcome in my own community.” FGD Hmong H2: (Nods with a tight-lipped expression) “I remember a time when my landlord treated me unfairly compared to other tenants, and I felt it was because of my background.” FGD Hmong H3: “My neighbor once harassed us because of our</p>
--	--	--	--	---

					ethnicity. He yelled racial slurs and vandalized our property. It was terrifying and left our family feeling unsafe in our own home.”
Culture and Language Barriers Make Immigrants Vulnerable to Human Rights Violations	Language Barriers Make Immigrants Vulnerable to Human Rights Violations	<p>Constant Vulnerability: The constant challenge of language and cultural barriers renders immigrants perpetually vulnerable to human rights violations</p> <p>Particular Vulnerability: Language barriers create particular vulnerabilities for immigrants, impacting their ability to access services, understand rights, and integrate effectively.</p> <p>Universal Vulnerability: Broader universal truth</p>	Language and Cultural Integration	Isolation due to language barriers, misunderstandings due to cultural differences, lack of fluency in English, difficulty accessing services	<p>Participant 1: “First of all, legal immigrants from Mexico, Somalia, and the Hmong community often face unique challenges when integrating into the Minnesota society. They come from different cultural backgrounds, and that transition can be particularly difficult. Language barriers are often a significant issue, making it harder for them to access essential services, understand their rights, and even seek legal assistance when needed.</p> <p>Participant 1: “Socially,</p>

		<p>about the vulnerability of immigrants across Minnesota who face similar challenges of language and cultural barriers in different contexts.</p> <p>Complex Vulnerability: Language and cultural barriers are intertwined with broader issues of access to healthcare, legal rights, and social integration.</p>		<p>misunderstandings stemming from cultural differences and language barriers can lead to issues with law enforcement, housing, and education. For example, a Somali family I worked with faced eviction because their landlord didn't understand their cultural practices of communal living. In another case, a Hmong student faced harassment and bullying at school due to cultural differences, which went unaddressed by the school administration.”</p> <p>FGD Mexicans M5: [Shows frustration] “Another thing that bothers me is the lack of information in Spanish about our rights. We need more resources and support to navigate the legal system.”</p> <p>FGD Somali S1: [Nervously adjusting her hijab] “Well, it's sometimes difficult to explain</p>
--	--	---	--	--

				<p>our problems because of the language barrier. Many of us can't speak fluent English, and that can lead to misunderstandings.”</p> <p>FGD Hmong H3: (with concern) “Language barriers can be really isolating. It's challenging to communicate effectively in many situations.”</p> <p>FGD Hmong H2: “I agree. Language can be a big barrier. Even getting a job can be difficult. You need to speak English well, and if you don't, it limits your opportunities. It's like we're outsiders sometimes.”</p>
	<p>Cultural Differences Between Immigrants and Residents Promote Human Rights Violations</p>		<p>Cultural Awareness and Integration</p>	<p>Lack of cultural awareness, barriers to help-seeking, misunderstandings</p> <p>Participant 1: “For Somali immigrants, the cultural barrier is a substantial challenge. The Somali community has a different concept of justice, often relying on traditional dispute resolution mechanisms that may not align with the US legal system.”</p> <p>Participant 1:</p>

				<p>“Socially, cultural differences and language barriers can create isolation and misunderstandings. The lack of cultural competency among service providers and, at times, hostility from certain segments of the population can further contribute to these violations.</p> <p>FGD Somali S4: [Sighs] “Also, the lack of understanding of our culture can lead to misunderstandings. Sometimes, things that are normal for us can be seen as strange or even suspicious here.”</p> <p>FGD Somali S2: [Nods in agreement] “Cultural differences can also be a barrier. In Somalia, we have our way of doing things, and here it's different. It can make us hesitant to seek help or report violations because we're not sure how things work.”</p> <p>FGD Hmong H3: (Raises an</p>
--	--	--	--	---

					eyebrow and leans forward) “I think there's a lack of awareness about Hmong culture, and that leads to misunderstandings. I've had to explain our traditions countless times.”
	Need For Improved Access to English Language Learning Programs	Complex Vulnerability: The need for multifaceted responses that address not only the language and cultural barriers but also the systemic conditions that perpetuate vulnerability.	Language Education Accessibility	Importance of English proficiency, lack of affordable language classes	FGD Hmong H1: “Well, it can be tough. Many times, our culture and language are very different from the mainstream, and that can create misunderstandings. For example, when I go to the hospital, explaining my symptoms accurately can be hard. They don't always understand me, and I don't always understand them, either. Sometimes, I just stay quiet.” FGD Hmong H2: (nods in agreement) “Yes, what H1 mentioned is real. Many of us have limited English skills, which makes it difficult to navigate the legal system. We need more

					<p>accessible services and resources.”</p> <p>Participant 1: “Due to language and cultural barriers, they may struggle to find and communicate with attorneys or advocates. This can lead to misunderstandings, and they might not be fully aware of their rights.”</p>
--	--	--	--	--	--

	<p>The Need for Cultural Sensitivity Training to Combat Negative Stereotypes Against Immigrants</p>		<p>Cultural Sensitivity Training</p>	<p>Importance of cultural sensitivity training for police, landlords, and service providers, reduction of stereotypes through education</p>	<p>Participant 1: “For Somali immigrants, the cultural barrier is a substantial challenge. The Somali community has a different concept of justice, often relying on traditional dispute resolution mechanisms that may not align with the U.S. legal system.Participant 1: “Socially, cultural differences and language barriers can create isolation and misunderstandings. The lack of cultural competency among service providers and, at times, hostility from certain segments of the population can further contribute to these violations.”FGD Somali S2: [Nods in agreement] “Cultural differences can also be a barrier. In Somalia, we have our way of doing things, and here it's different. It can make us hesitant to seek help or report violations because we're</p>
--	---	--	--------------------------------------	---	---

					<p>not sure how things work." FGD Hmong H3: (Raises an eyebrow and leans forward) "I think there's a lack of awareness about Hmong culture, and that leads to misunderstandings. I've had to explain our traditions countless times."</p> <p>Participant 1: First of all, legal immigrants from Mexico, Somalia, and the Hmong community often face unique challenges when integrating into the Minnesota society. They come from different cultural backgrounds, and that transition can be particularly difficult. Language barriers are often a significant issue, making it harder for them to access essential services, understand their rights, and even seek legal assistance when needed.</p> <p>Participant 5: "Over the years, there have been several</p>
--	--	--	--	--	--

					<p>successful initiatives and programs in Minnesota aimed at addressing human rights violations against legal immigrants, particularly those of Mexican, Somali, and Hmong descent. One noteworthy example is the "Cultural Sensitivity Training Program" initiated by the Minnesota Department of Human Rights in collaboration with community organizations.</p> <p>Participant 5: "This program focuses on educating law enforcement officers, social workers, healthcare professionals, and educators about the unique cultural backgrounds and experiences of immigrants from these communities. It has helped improve interactions between these professionals and immigrants, reducing instances of discrimination and ensuring that</p>
--	--	--	--	--	--

					<p>individuals receive fair and equitable treatment.”</p> <p>Participant 2: “First and foremost, it’s essential to enhance cultural competency and sensitivity training within organizations and government agencies. This would help staff better understand and respect the diverse backgrounds, needs, and experiences of immigrants from these groups.”</p> <p>FGD Mexicans M3: (Empathetic) “We should also promote cultural sensitivity training for officials and service providers.”</p> <p>FGD Somali S1: “I would like to see more cultural exchange programs and community events that promote understanding between different communities.”</p> <p>FGD Somali S2: “Many of us have attended cultural sensitivity training sessions to educate others about our customs and</p>
--	--	--	--	--	--

					<p>practices, hoping to reduce misunderstandings and discrimination.FGD Hmong H4: (enthusiastic) “More cultural education in schools would help break down stereotypes.”FGD Hmong H2: (Nods) Absolutely. “And it's also important for institutions like the police and landlords to receive cultural sensitivity training.”</p>
--	--	--	--	--	---

<p>Legal System Complexity and Legal Immigrants' Lack of Awareness on How to Navigate the Complex Legal Environment</p>	<p>Lack of Knowledge and Awareness on How to Navigate the Complex Legal Environment</p>	<p>Constant Vulnerability: The constant challenge faced by legal immigrants in understanding and navigating the United State's complex legal system creates a perpetual state of vulnerability.</p> <p>Particular Vulnerability: Different immigrant groups mentioned in the study, such as the Hmong immigrants, face specific challenges related to language barriers, limited education, and knowledge of the legal system.</p> <p>Universal Vulnerability: The systemic challenges within the legal framework disproportionately affect immigrants across the state.</p> <p>Complex Vulnerability: Navigating the complex legal environment</p>	<p>Legal System Navigation</p>	<p>Complex legal system, systemic challenges, confusion over immigration paperwork, policy changes creating uncertainty</p>	<p>FGD Mexicans M3: (Looks worried) "Immigration paperwork can be confusing and stressful. One mistake can jeopardize our status. Having more accessible legal advice for immigration matters is essential."</p> <p>FGD Hmong H4: "Reporting violations is complicated. When you don't speak English fluently, you might not know where to report or how to do it properly. And even if you try, sometimes, people just don't listen or take you seriously. It's discouraging."</p> <p>Participant 1: "As for Hmong immigrants, they may have limited education and knowledge of the U.S. legal system, making it challenging to understand their rights or navigate the complexities of immigration law."</p> <p>Participant 1: "Legal immigrants, as well as refugees,</p>
---	---	---	--------------------------------	---	---

		<p>without adequate knowledge or awareness amplifies immigrants' vulnerabilities, affecting their ability to assert rights and seek justice.</p>		<p>have faced systemic challenges within the legal framework.”</p> <p>Participant 2: “Starting with the legal aspect, navigating the U.S. immigration system is a complicated and lengthy process. The extensive waiting times for visas, green cards, or citizenship often leave individuals in a state of uncertainty. This can lead to a sense of vulnerability, knowing that their legal status could change at any time due to policy shifts or delays in processing.”</p> <p>FGD Mexicans M2: “I believe legal immigrants need more support when it comes to navigating the legal system. Many of us struggle to understand our rights and responsibilities here. I'd like to see more accessible legal advice.”</p> <p>Participant 1: “Another great initiative is the</p>
--	--	--	--	--

					<p>"Legal Aid for Immigrants" program. It offers pro bono legal assistance to legal immigrants facing various challenges, including human rights violations. This program has been instrumental in providing immigrants with the legal representation they need to address their issues and seek justice."</p> <p>FGD Hmong H1: (nodding) "Legal assistance and knowing your rights are crucial. I learned that the hard way."</p> <p>FGD Hmong H2: (Facial expression: Thoughtful) "Access to information about our legal rights and responsibilities as immigrants would be beneficial. It would empower us and reduce the chances of exploitation."</p>
--	--	--	--	--	--




Fear of Reporting Abuses & Violations	Immigrants Experience Fear of Being Deported if they Report Human Rights Violations	<p>Constant Vulnerability: The constant fear of deportation or retaliation for reporting violations or abuses further entrenches the vulnerable state of immigrants, inhibiting their ability to seek redress.</p> <p>Particular Vulnerability: Legal immigrants, especially those without legal representation, are particularly vulnerable. They are uniquely impacted by the fear of legal repercussions, which discourages them from reporting abuses or seeking help.</p> <p>Universal Vulnerability: The fear of deportation and the impact of reporting abuses is a universal vulnerability that silences immigrants across the board and</p>	Fear of Deportation	Fear of deportation, impact on reporting abuses, silence due to fear of status scrutiny	<p>FGD Mexicans M5: (Tears well up in eyes) “I had an incident where someone threatened to report me to immigration just because I got into an argument with them. It’s terrifying to live with that kind of fear.”</p> <p>FGD Mexicans M1: (Leans forward) “Well, my workplace refused to pay me the minimum wage, and they threatened to report me to immigration if I complained. It affected my family’s financial stability, and we lived in fear.”</p> <p>FGD Somali S3: [Looks thoughtful] “I think the fear of discrimination plays a role, too. We’ve heard stories of other immigrants facing discrimination, so that can make us reluctant to engage with authorities.”</p> <p>Participant 5: “The fear of deportation and family separation can deter individuals from reporting abuses or seeking legal</p>
---------------------------------------	---	---	---------------------	---	--

		<p>perpetuates human rights violations.</p> <p>Complex Vulnerability: Navigating the complex legal environment without adequate knowledge or awareness amplifies immigrants' vulnerabilities, affecting their ability to assert rights and seek justice.</p>		<p>redress when their rights are violated. This vulnerability is exacerbated by the lack of affordable legal representation for immigrants, which further limits their ability to navigate the complex legal system.”</p> <p>Participant 1: “The immigration enforcement climate can deter these immigrants from reporting violations, fearing that their status may be scrutinized. This fear often forces them into silence, allowing human rights violations to persist.”</p> <p>Participant 1: “Many are afraid that seeking legal assistance or reporting violations may lead to deportation or separation from their families.”</p>
--	--	---	--	---

	<p>Fear of Retaliation from Human Rights Violation Perpetrators</p>		<p>Fear of Retaliation</p>	<p>Fear of retaliation, hesitation to report violations, concerns about being believed</p>	<p>FGD Mexicans M5: (Looks resigned) “My brother was racially profiled by the police, but he didn't report it. He was afraid of what might happen if he did.” FGD Somali S5: (Nods slowly) “I haven't reported anything personally. It's mainly because of fear—fear of retaliation, fear of not being believed.” (Frowns). FGD Mexicans M2: (Looks down and speaks softly) “I've never reported anything. I was afraid that if I did, I might face even more problems. Plus, I didn't think they would really do anything about it.” FGD Mexicans M4: (Appears thoughtful) “My cousin faced housing discrimination. She decided to document everything, but she's hesitant to report it because she's worried about losing her home.” FGD Hmong H2: (Body language:</p>
--	---	--	----------------------------	--	---

					<p>Slightly shaking head) "I haven't reported anything, even though I've seen some things. Reporting feels like it might bring more trouble, and I'm not sure if they'd really help. FGD Hmong H4: (Body language: Crosses arms defensively) "I never reported anything. You hear stories of others who did and faced repercussions. I didn't want to risk it."</p>
--	--	--	--	--	---

Appendix B: CITI Certificate

		Completion Date 05-Jun-2023 Expiration Date N/A Record ID 56304670
This is to certify that:		
John Ewu		
Has completed the following CITI Program course:		Not valid for renewal of certification through CME.
<p style="text-align: center;"> Student's (Curriculum Group) Doctoral Student Researchers (Course Learner Group) 1 - Basic Course (Stage) </p>		
Under requirements set by:		
Walden University		
		 Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative 101 NE 3rd Avenue, Suite 320 Fort Lauderdale, FL 33301 US www.citiprogram.org
Verify at www.citiprogram.org/verify/?wf9be1d99a-47b0-b3a3-86505807c9ca-56304670		

Appendix C: List of Acronyms

ACA: Affordable Care Act

CBP: Customs and Border Patrol

CDC: Center for Disease Control

CESCR: Committee on Economic Social and Cultural Rights

CHIP: Children's Health Insurance Program

CIA: Central Intelligence Agency

DACA: Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals

EBSCO: Elton B. Stephens Company

ERIC: Education Resources Information Center

FGD: Focus Group Discussion

H1, H2, H3, H4, H5: Hmong Focus Group Participants

HVNA: Hmong Veterans' Naturalization Act

IBHR: International Bill of Human Rights

ICCPR: International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights

ICE: Immigration and Customs Enforcement

ICESCR: International Covenant of Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights

ILO: International Labor Organization

IM: Invisible Minority

IMRAA: Migration and Refugee Assistance Act

IRB: Institutional Review Board

IRCA: Immigration Reform and Control Act

ISIS: Islamic State of Iraq and Syria

LEP: Limited English Proficiency

LPR: Lawful Permanent Resident

M1, M2, M3, M4, M5: Mexican Focus Group Participants

NSEERS: Security Entry-Exit Registration System

P1, P2, P3, P4, P5: Individual Interviews Participants

S1, S2, S3, S4, S5: Somali Focus Group Participants

UAE: United Arab Emirates

UDHR: Universal Declaration of Human Rights

UN: United Nations

Appendix D: Focus Group Discussion Guide

Research Question:

How do legal immigrants of Mexican, Somali, and Hmong descent experience human rights violations in Minnesota as a vulnerable population?

Demographic Questions

1. What is your age range and gender Identity?
2. What is your highest level of education completed?
3. What is your marital status?
4. Do you have children? If yes, how many?
5. What is your household income range?

Focus Group Discussion Questions

1. How would you describe your experiences as a legal immigrant of (Mexican, Somali, or Hmong) descent in Minnesota?
2. Have you or anyone you know experienced human rights violations in Minnesota? Can you describe what happened and how it affected you or your family?
3. How do you feel the broader community in Minnesota views legal immigrants of your (Mexican, Somali, and Hmong) descent? Do you feel that you and your community are respected and valued?
4. What kinds of support or resources would you like to see made available to legal immigrants in Minnesota?

5. How have recent changes in immigration policies affected you in Minnesota?
What do you think could be done to improve the treatment of legal immigrants in Minnesota?
6. Have you or anyone you know ever reported a human rights violation to law enforcement or another organization? If so, what was the response like? If not, why not?
7. How do cultural differences or linguistic challenges affect legal immigrants of Mexican, Somali, and Hmong descent to access resources or report human rights violations in Minnesota? What can be done to improve this situation?
8. What would you like policymakers and elected officials in Minnesota to know about the experiences and needs of legal immigrants of Mexican, Somali, and Hmong descent when it comes to human rights violations? How can they better support your community?

Appendix E: Semistructured Interview Protocol

Research Question:

How do legal immigrants of Mexican, Somali, and Hmong descent experience human rights violations in Minnesota as a vulnerable population?

Demographic Questions

1. What is your age and gender Identity?
2. What is your race/ethnicity?
3. What is your profession, and what motivates you as a/an (human rights expert/immigration advocate)?
4. Are you familiar with any of the following immigrant populations: Mexican, Somali, or Hmong?
5. What specific issues related to immigration do you focus on in your advocacy work?

Interview Questions

1. Would you consider legal (Mexican, Somali, and Hmong) immigrants as vulnerable populations in Minnesota? Why or why not?
2. Can you share any personal experiences or observations of human rights violations that legal immigrants of your (Mexican, Somali, or Hmong) descent have faced in Minnesota?
3. In your opinion, in what ways have human rights violations impacted the daily lives of legal immigrants of Mexican, Somali, and Hmong descent living in Minnesota?

4. Have you noticed any differences in the types of human rights violations experienced by legal immigrants of Mexican, Somali, and Hmong descent compared to other vulnerable populations in Minnesota?
5. Can you identify any specific historical, legal, political, economic, or social factors contributing to human rights violations against legal immigrants of Mexican, Somali, and Hmong descent in Minnesota?
6. In your opinion, how can organizations, government agencies, and communities better support legal immigrants of Mexican, Somali, and Hmong descent in Minnesota to prevent human rights violations?
7. Can you share any successful initiatives or programs that have helped address human rights violations against legal immigrants of Mexican, Somali, and Hmong descent in Minnesota?
8. What challenges do legal immigrants of Mexican, Somali, and Hmong descent face when seeking legal assistance or reporting human rights violations in Minnesota?
9. How can we better educate the public and raise awareness about human rights violations against legal immigrants of Mexican, Somali, and Hmong descent in Minnesota?
10. What can be done to ensure that legal immigrants of Mexican, Somali, and Hmong descent have equal access to resources, services, and opportunities in Minnesota without experiencing discrimination or marginalization?