

12-23-2025

Unintended Consequences of California's Proposition 12 Affecting Low-Income Communities

Blanca Estella Garcia
Walden University

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Walden University

College of Health Sciences and Public Policy

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Blanca Estella Garcia

has been found to be complete and satisfactory in all respects,
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Review Committee

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

Dr. Gregory Campbell, Committee Member,
Public Policy and Administration Faculty

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

Walden University
2025

Abstract

Unintended Consequences of California's Proposition 12 Affecting Low-Income

Communities

by

Blanca Estella Garcia

MPA, Columbia Southern University, 2018

BS, Urbana University, 2016

Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

Public Policy Administration

Walden University

November 2025

Abstract

The background of this study established context describing the 2018 implementation of Proposition 12 in California, a law intended to improve animal welfare standards. The central problem identified the law's unintended effects on multiple stakeholders, which prior literature suggested could include increased production costs and limit consumer access. However, existing studies have focused on theoretical and economic projections, leaving gaps in understanding secondary data research and practical impacts on farmers and low-income consumers. The purpose of the study was to examine unforeseen consequences of Proposition 12, with attention to its direct and indirect impacts on animal welfare, farmers, and low-income consumers. Two research questions guided the inquiry: (1) How did Proposition 12 affect animal welfare, farmers, and low-income consumers in California? (2) What unintended consequences emerged as a result of the law's implementation? The conceptual framework was based on Merton's law of unintended consequences, a theoretical lens for analyzing the findings and understanding broader policy implications. The methodology employed a qualitative approach, and secondary data from archived policy documents and reports, with thematic analysis used to interpret the data. Key findings summarized that, while Proposition 12 led to meaningful improvements in animal welfare, it resulted in significant economic challenges for farmers and reduced access to affordable animal products for low-income consumers, echoing concerns noted in previous scholarship. The implications for social change links the study's outcomes to Walden University's mission fostering positive change through evidence-based policy.

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Dedication

In loving memory of a teacher who saw in me potential, Sally de la Riva, whose unwavering support and belief of my potential ignited my journey. Her encouragement and second chances inspired me to harness my passion for literature and become a knowledgeable woman I am today. As a first-generation Mexican woman, I recognize rarity of my accomplishments in a world where few women like me forged similar paths. With parents who had only a second-grade education, I have always understood a transformative power of education and social change that comes rarely. Completing my PhD proposal, a rare feat, symbolizes not only my personal achievement but also my commitment to paving a way for future generations. I aspire to be a leader and a role model for students who will follow behind me, inspiring them to dream with no limitations and reach for heights once thought unattainable. I am deeply grateful to Dr. Gregory Campbell (Committee Member), whose collaborative spirit and tireless efforts made it possible for me to navigate the complexities of my proposal and realize this significant milestone. His support has been invaluable.

I also wish to acknowledge all invaluable wisdom and tools imparted to me by Dr. Rebecca Stout, Dr. David Brown Sr. at Walden University, Dr. Raj Singh (Chair), Dr. Gregory Campbell and Dr. Bidjerano D. Morris. Their mentorship has been foundational, fueling countless hours of study and exploration. With humble gratitude, I dedicate this proposal to all those who have shaped my academic journey, and I hope to carry forward their influence in inspiring the lives of students I aspire to serve.

Acknowledgments

I would like to extend my heartfelt gratitude to my committee chair, Dr. Morris Bidjerano, as well as Dr. Raj Singh (Chair), Dr. Gregory Campbell (Committee Member), and Associate Dean Dr. Rebecca Stout and Dr. David Brown, Sr. PhD, PhD. Their unwavering support, guidance, and scientific leadership have been instrumental throughout my academic journey. Dr. Stout, in particular, consistently encouraged me to strive for excellence, even during moments when I doubted myself, and her belief in me never wavered. I would also like to acknowledge the profound impact of Sally de la Riva and Dr. Brother Camillus Chavez of St. Mary's College in Moraga, California. Their recognition of my potential and encouragement to pursue a Ph.D. as a pathway to effecting social change have left a legacy. Though both have passed away, I am confident they would share in my joy and success. Their faith in me was so strong that they generously supported my attendance at UC Berkeley and the Pre-College Academy, which were pivotal in preparing me for this journey.

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Chapter 1: Introduction to Study

In 2018, California voters passed Proposition 12 the Farm Animal Confinement Initiative (FACI) to address animal cruelty and confinement standards for breeding pigs, egg-laying hens, and veal calves. While making a significant positive step in ensuring animal welfare, the new regulations and confinement standards led to price hikes and pork meat shortages among many low-income, non-white communities in the state. Those unintended consequences of Proposition 12 received less attention, in research literature, and required further exploration.

The purpose of this study was to explore what considerations policymakers and policy advocates gave to the needs of low-income nonwhite communities during the formulation of Proposition 12, and how its potential impact on those communities were assessed. In Chapter 1, I present the background of the problem and a summary of the research literature on the topic. Next, I will discuss the purpose of the study and research questions, the selected research design, the planned data sources and analysis, and the anticipated significance of the study.

Background

In this study was determined that from most of the propositions and legislation implemented in different states, the goal was to improve the welfare of people of various ages, and socioeconomic levels about California's Proposition 12 law which was one of the few ballot propositions that outlined farm animals' caging requirements. It was passed so that farmers and owners of farm animals would provide them with more caging space to signify the absence of cruelty, and concern towards sheltering welfare (Burd,

2022). Consequently, California's Proposition 12 has been worthwhile in improving the welfare of farm animals within the state by ensuring that animals can lie down, stand freely, and stretch their limbs during caging.

The passing of California's Proposition 12 attributed to the immense support of different animal protection groups that showed concern for the tiny cages in which farm animals were being sheltered, while 63% of California's registered voters voted for its implementation, and 37% voted against it (Chang, 2021). Despite the immense support that the proposition has been accorded with since it was passed in 2018, it continues to have controversial economic and legal implications for the state (Stewart, 2021). To comply with the new space requirements, many pork producers have had to invest in new housing systems or renovate existing facilities, which increased their operating costs. These increased costs were passed on to consumers through higher prices for pork products.

Another potential unintended consequence of Proposition 12 on pork farming in California was that it led to a decline in the number of pig farms in the state. Some farmers decided to leave the industry and scale back their operations due to the new laws, increased costs, and regulatory burdens. Also, a decline in pork products in California led consumers to turn to other food alternatives from the increase in food prices. The literature on Proposition 12 assessed its positive and negative effects on animals and the general population of California regardless of their socioeconomic status (Wallace, 2021).

In addition, there is a gap in the literature on whether potential consequences of Proposition 12 on lower-income populations within the state were considered and how the possible impact of the price increases and changes in income raised from farm animal products such as eggs and meat were assessed during the formulation of Proposition 12. This study was needed to fill this gap in the literature.

Problem Statement

The problem this study focused on is that it was unknown how policymakers and policy advocates assessed the potential impact of Proposition 12 on low-income Hispanic, Pacific Islanders, African Americans, and Asian American communities during its formulation. According to evidence from estimations of agricultural economics professors at UC Davis CA & ES, Proposition 12 affected food sustainability, increasing pork prices and reducing sales, especially to low-income communities (DeBaise & Dooley, 2021). Estimations in recent literature showed that Californians expected to pay approximately 8% more for pork regulated foods under Proposition 12, while low-income residents reduced pork consumption by 6% annually following predicted price increases (DeBaise & Dooley, 2021).

Purpose of Study

The purpose of this study was to explore considerations policymakers and policy advocates made towards the needs of low-income nonwhite communities during the formulation of Proposition 12, and how its potential impact on those communities were assessed. The conceptual foundation for this study was based on Robert K. Merton's five sources of unintended consequences. Although the original goal focused on the analysis

of factors considered by legislators when drafting Proposition 12, the revised purpose sought to thoroughly examine the many effects on underprivileged populations and the agriculture industry. Drawing on Merton's theoretical framework, the research aimed to examine both the intended and unexpected consequences of Proposition 12, as well as any possible differences between the goals of the policy and its actual results.

Merton's five causes—ignorance, mistake, self-defeating prophecy, immediate interest, and goal displacement—helped comprehend the complex processes that led to unexpected outcomes. Using this methodology, the research aimed to determine whether policymakers knew their actions might impact farmers and low-income nonwhite populations and whether they were unaware that unanticipated consequences would result from oversight or calculation errors. Additionally, the study examined how proponents and legislators evaluated Proposition 12 effects as drafted. Beyond the immediate impact on animal welfare, the investigation explored the broader social, economic, and cultural implications for farmers and low-income communities. The study intended to give significant insights into the development of policies with enormous ramifications by clarifying the decision-making processes and considerations. It emphasized the importance of comprehensive awareness of the elements impacting policy results.

The research utilized a qualitative case study approach and secondary data sources such as media stories, government publications, and advocacy organization reports. It thoroughly examined Proposition 12 unforeseen repercussions. Thanks to the thematic analysis technique, a more sophisticated understanding of the intricate interactions between policy choices and their effects on vulnerable populations and the

agricultural industry was possible, making it easier to identify and analyze patterns. The study's overall goals was to significantly contribute to the body of knowledge on policy evaluation and offer practical advice to legislators so they may consider the various effects of regulations on different societal groups.

Research Questions

This research study addressed the following two questions:

RQ1: What consideration was given by policymakers and policy advocates to the needs of low-income communities during the formulation of Proposition 12?

RQ2: How did policymakers and policy advocates assess the potential impact of Proposition 12 on low-income nonwhite communities during its formulation?

Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework that was useful in undertaking the current study was the law of unintended consequences. It was formulated in 1936 by Robert Merton, who thought that social, economic, and political actions usually had positive and negative effects that were unintended or unanticipated depending on how they were undertaken (Norton, 2023). Two major propositions encompassing the concept of unintended consequences helped achieve the purpose of the current study. One of them was that ignorance and error were the most pervasive sources of unintended consequences that may have been inevitable due to social, economic, and political actions (Chollete & Harrison, 2021). The other was that some parties who were responsible for such actions may have been in so much need of intended consequences that they chose to ignore the potential occurrence of unintended ones (Norton, 2023). Therefore, such a proposition

may explain why some regulators and legislators accepted negative unintended consequences of their actions even if they will foresee them.

Nature of the Study

The nature of this study was a qualitative case study of unintended consequences of California's Proposition 12 on low-income communities. The case study design was an approach to inquiry that involved a multifaceted and in-depth investigation of a complex problem in real-life settings (Priya, 2020). The qualitative case study design included a detailed exploration of how an event, program, or activity affected an individual or many people over a defined period (Priya, 2020). The case study design suited the proposed study because it supported using diverse data sources to facilitate in-depth analysis and knowledge of a phenomenon (Priya, 2020). The study used secondary data to explore the consequences of Proposition 12 with data sources ranging from various media accounts and government publications to reports from animal organizations and advocacy groups. Data was analyzed through a qualitative thematic analysis method involving coding, categorizing, and theming the data (Saldana, 2016).

Definitions

Case study: A case study is a research approach used to generate an in-depth, multifaceted understanding of complex issues in their real-life context (Crowe et al., 2011).

Proposition 12: Known as the Farm Animal Confinement Initiative (FACI), Proposition 12 is a landmark California law that protects mother pigs, veal calves, and

egg-laying hens from being confined cruelly. The law prohibits the in-state sale of products from caged animals raised out of state (Chang, 2021).

Secondary data analysis: Research that uses information someone else has gathered for their purpose. The secondary data analysis seeks to answer a new research question or examine alternative perspectives on the primary research question from a previous study (Boslaugh, 2007).

Theory of legal animal rights: Legal animal rights are based on moral rights and legal rights embedded in (a) the structure of legal animal rights, (b) animal rights, (c) animal liberties, (d) animal rights and duties: correlativity and reciprocity in will theory and interest theory (Erasmus, 2020; Stucki, 2020).

Unforeseen/unanticipated consequences: Unintended or unexpected consequences are the unintended consequences of an action or decision that will have been prevented or mitigated through foresight and careful planning. Unanticipated consequences also occur due to unforeseen actions or policies that will have been avoided (Suckling et al., 2021).

Unintended consequences: Unintended consequences refer to results resulting from choices or activities that were not intended or anticipated. Moreover, unintended consequences highlight the necessity of thorough preparation, considering potential risks, and being flexible when overseeing unexpected outcomes across various professions and places (Coyne, 2014).

Assumptions

In the study, I found credible and transferable findings, and that the policy itself focused on both intended and unintended consequences. In addition, I emphasized that it would be possible to explore the policy's intended and unintended consequences using the selected design, and that the secondary sources would have data relevant to the study's purpose. I also assumed that data collection and analysis would be free from personal biases. Furthermore, I made clarification that the selected conceptual framework was aligned with the study's research questions, focusing on the impact of the policy on low-income communities. Lastly, I applied personal competence, and justification in applying conceptual analysis towards qualitative secondary data assumptions.

Scope and Delimitations

In this study, I focused specifically on the challenges that the California Proposition 12 legislation presented to low-income people in the state, analyzing whether their needs were adequately considered during the formulation process and how the impact of the newly introduced caging standards was assessed (Dwyer, 2023). This study only examined part of the spectrum of policy goals, effects, and implementation outcomes. Furthermore, the scope of the research included the laws of unintended consequences on food sustainability for lower-income communities (Dwyer, 2023; Dwyer et al., 2022). In the study, I explained the unintended consequences of Proposition 12 using readily available secondary data and utilized prior and current resources addressing the law of unintended consequences as the basis for criticizing the government policy (Norton, 2023). I also explained how unintended consequences undermined the

achievement of the policy's goals. Therefore, the state government of California will benefit from findings to better attain the proposition's goals.

Limitations

The findings of using secondary data revealed several limitations. It was noted that potential errors in previous studies and reports possibly may impact the credibility of the proposed research. Additionally, relying on already compiled data, as opposed to raw data, posed a challenge. Certain data sources, such as newspapers and personal records, were found to have an elevated risk of bias. To mitigate these limitations, efforts were made to corroborate or compare information across various sources to verify facts. Furthermore, it was observed that using the case study design meant that the findings might only be accurate and applicable to California, without generalizability to other contexts (Priya, 2020).

Significance of the Study

The significance of this study lies in shedding light on the potential negative and unintended consequences of California's Proposition 12 for low-income pork-consuming households. The research study provides valuable insights into how this policy leads to a scarcity of pork meat and a subsequent dramatic price increase, disproportionately affecting a specific segment of the low-income population in California (Formica, 2021). These findings contribute to advancing knowledge in policy studies, particularly in understanding the impact of legislation on vulnerable demographics.

Summary

In Chapter 1 of this study, I introduced the background of the problem and provided a summary of the research literature. I also discussed the purpose of the study, the research questions, the research design, the data sources, and analysis planned, and the significance of the study. I also identified the two main research questions, “What consideration was given by policymakers and policy advocates to the needs of low-income communities during the formulation of Proposition 12?” and “How did policymakers and policy advocates assess the potential impact of Proposition 12 on low-income nonwhite communities during its formulation?” The conceptual framework used in the study was the law of unintended consequences, and this study utilized secondary data collected from various sources, including newspaper reports, peer-reviewed journal articles, government publications, and reports from animal organizations. The data were analyzed using thematic analysis approaches. The study’s significance lies in its potential contribution to positive policy changes and implementation practices affecting low-income pork consumers and pig farmers. The next chapter focuses on the literature review to analyze and synthesize existing literature on the topic.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

The problem this study focused on is that it was unknown how policymakers and policy advocates assessed the potential impact of Proposition 12 on low-income Hispanic, Pacific Islanders, African Americans, and Asian American communities during its formulation. While previous studies primarily focused on the positive and negative effects of the legislation on animals and the general population, little is known about how the potential increase in prices of pork products and changes in income raised from farm animal products affect those in lower socioeconomic groups. Therefore, this study was needed to provide a more comprehensive understanding of the implications of Proposition 12 on different segments of the population, particularly those with limited financial resources.

The purpose of this qualitative case study was to explore the consideration given to the needs of these underprivileged populations by policymakers and policy advocates during the formulation of Proposition 12 and how its impact on those communities were assessed. This chapter briefly presents the literature review strategy employed, describing Merton's five causes of unintended consequences, and reviews studies that have utilized Merton's concepts. The remaining sections include a focused review of studies on the impact of Proposition 12 on animal welfare, the potential economic impact locations of Proposition 12 for farmers and low-income communities, and broader social and cultural implications.

Literature Search Strategy

The literature review for this study on unintended consequences of California Proposition 12 on low-income communities began with an extensive search of relevant databases in the Walden University Oasis Library, such as Academic Search Complete, EBSCO, and Sage, as well as search engines such as Research Gate and Google Scholar. The following keywords search terms were used, and a combination of search items included: *California Proposition 12, Proposition 12, Farmer California Bureau, NPPC, CFDA, food strategy, animal welfare, sustainability of pork for low-income communities, economic effect on low-income communities, livestock, agricultural livestock, unintended consequences, California Proposition 12, and low-income communities.*

Conceptual Framework

For this study, the concept being utilized was Merton's law of unintended consequences. This concept was formulated in 1936 by Merton, who identified five sources of unintended consequences: ignorance, error, urgent interests, basic values, and self-fulfilling prophecy. The law of unintended consequences suggests that social, economic, and political actions can have both positive and negative effects, often unintended or unanticipated. The primary writings by Merton on the law of unintended consequences provide key statements that benefited to define the concept. Specifically, Merton argued that actions taken to achieve certain outcomes can often lead to unintended consequences detrimental to society. In addition, Merton suggested that ignorance and error are the most pervasive sources of unintended consequences, which are inevitable due to social, economic, and political actions. In the current study, the law

of unintended consequences serves as a helpful framework for understanding the potential positive and negative effects of social, economic, and political actions. By utilizing this concept, this study aims to identify and analyze unintended consequences that arise from various actions taken by regulators and legislators. This framework is significant towards providing a more comprehensive understanding of the potential impacts of these actions and informing future decision-making.

Merton's law of unintended consequences has been influential as a conceptual framework for various research studies. Several other researchers have used Merton's law of unintended consequences as a framework for their studies. For instance, a study by Capano and Howlett (2019) examined unintended consequences of regulatory reforms in the education sector. The researchers utilized Merton's principle to analyze regulatory reforms' potential positive and negative effects on various stakeholders, such as students, teachers, and administrators. Their findings suggest that regulatory reforms can have unintended consequences, such as reduced teacher autonomy and increased student stress. Another study by Hui et al. (2019) used Merton's principle to examine unintended consequences of mobile payment adoption in China. The researchers utilized a mixed-methods approach, which involved analyzing secondary data from the Chinese government and conducting surveys with mobile payment users.

Their findings suggest that mobile payment adoption has unintended consequences, such as increased financial risk for users and reduced privacy. Moreover, a study by Jiang et al. (2018) applied Merton's principle to analyze unintended consequences of China's one-child policy. The researchers utilized a qualitative approach

involving interviews with families affected by the policy. Their findings suggest that the one-child policy had unintended consequences, such as increased pressure on children to succeed and reduced support for elderly parents. These studies and others demonstrate the versatility of Merton's law of unintended consequences as a framework for analyzing a wide range of policies and events. By utilizing this framework, researchers identify and explore unintended consequences of social, economic, and political actions, which can inform future decision-making.

One such study is the research by Tarisayi and Munyaradzi (2020), which investigated the economic and legal implications of shutting down the Internet on learning and teaching. Another area where Merton's principle was applied in was toward analyzing unintended consequences affecting agriculture and low-income families. A study by Clark and Dietz (2017) used Merton's principle to examine the impact of the 2008 global food crisis on low-income families in the United States. The researchers utilized a mixed-methods approach, which involved analyzing secondary data from the U.S. Census Bureau and conducting focus groups with low-income families. Their findings revealed that the food crisis resulted in unintended consequences, such as increased food insecurity and malnutrition among low-income families. Similarly, a study by Raskin and Ensor (2018) analyzed the impact of climate change on agriculture and low-income families in African countries. The researchers utilized Merton's concept to understand the unintended consequences of climate change policies on small-scale farmers and their families, and their findings revealed that climate change policies aimed

at reducing greenhouse gas emissions had unintended consequences, such as reducing the income of small-scale farmers and increasing their vulnerability to climate change.

In conclusion, Merton's law of unintended consequences is a significant framework for understanding the impact of policies and events on agriculture and low-income families. Studies that utilize this framework provide valuable insights into the unintended consequences of policies and events, which can inform policy development and implementation.

Literature Review Related to Key Concepts

Economic Implications of Proposition 12

The primary constructs of interest in the research question are the unintended economic consequences of California's Proposition 12 on farmers and pork consumers. Researchers in the discipline have approached this problem from various perspectives, including examining the cost of pork production, price increases, product shortages, and piglet mortality. Hitzer (2021) and Formica (2021) have investigated the negative impacts of Proposition 12 on pork consumers and farmers, respectively. Hitzer employed a product quantity and price approach to assessing consumer accessibility to pork products and found that pig confinement laws lead to pork shortages and increased prices, which result in low-income earners being unable to afford pork. A recent study published in the *Journal of Agricultural and Resource Economics* analyzed the potential impacts of Proposition 12 on the pork industry in California. The study found that the law has decreased the number of hogs raised in the state, leading to a shortage of pork products

and higher prices. The study also notes that the price increase will impact low-income communities the most, as they may struggle to afford alternative protein sources.

Moreover, the study found that implementing Proposition 12 has led to increased production costs for farmers, which has further impact on the economic viability of the pork industry in California. The study's authors argue that the law may also have unintended consequences on animal welfare, as farmers are forced to cut corners to remain profitable. Another study conducted by the Agricultural and Resource Economics Department at the University of California, Davis, found that the implementation of Proposition 12 results in the outmigration of pork production to other states, where regulations are less stringent. This further impacts the economic viability of the pork industry in California and leads to job losses in the state. Despite these concerns, supporters of Proposition 12 argue that the law is necessary to improve animal welfare and that the economic impacts are temporary.

In a recent op-ed in the Los Angeles Times, animal welfare advocates argue that the law has already significantly improved the living conditions of egg-laying hens, breeding pigs, and veal calves in California. In conclusion, the ongoing debate surrounding Proposition 12 highlights the complex trade-offs between animal welfare and economic considerations. While the law has improved animal welfare, its impact on the pork industry and low-income communities cannot be ignored. As California continues implementing the law, monitoring its impact on all stakeholders will be important. On the other hand, Formica (2021) highlighted that Proposition 12 will cause a shortage in the supply of pork and trigger a 50% increase in pork prices, leading to consumer loss and

financial losses for farmers. Pacelle (2022) investigated increased piglet mortality caused by Proposition 12, and raising cost of pork production forces small-scale hog businesses to remain unprofitable, leading to farmers exiting the market. DeBiase and Dodey (2021) focused on consumer welfare and found that Proposition 12 reduces pork consumption among low-income communities due to increased pork prices. The concepts of cost production, price increase, product shortages, and piglet mortality are critical in understanding unintended consequences of Proposition 12. In addition, potential unintended consequences of Proposition 12 prompted Sacramento County Superior Judge James P. Arguelles to delay enforcement until the state enacts final regulations. The California Department of Food Agriculture (CDFA) was notably 2 years behind in finalizing these regulations, contributing to the delay (Shaffer, 2022). The concept of unintended consequences in decision-making processes concerning Proposition 12 introduces a level of complexity. It leaves room for evaluation and advisement, contingent on the actual impact of Proposition 12. This theory of unintended consequences highlights the need for careful consideration of the effects of policies and their potential to lead to unintended outcomes.

The rationale for selecting these concepts is supported by the literature, which consistently shows that Proposition 12 has negative implications for farmers and pork consumers. Therefore, investigating the unintended consequences of Proposition 12 on these constructions is crucial to inform policymakers and stakeholders of the potential impacts of the law. Synthesizing the studies related to the key concepts under investigation reveals that implementing Proposition 12 will increase pork production

costs, shortages, and prices of pork products. These unintended consequences can negatively affect farmers and pork consumers, particularly low-income earners. Therefore, policymakers must consider these unintended consequences when implementing laws and policies affecting the pork industry.

Another study by Solomon and colleagues (2021) investigated the potential effects of Proposition 12 on the pork industry in California. The study found that Proposition 12 regulations significantly reduce the state's pig farming and pork production. This reduction in production has negative economic consequences for farmers, who are forced to reduce their herds or enter the market entirely. The study also noted that the regulations lead to higher pork prices for consumers, particularly low-income earners. In addition to these studies, there are several legal challenges to Proposition 12 as The National Pork Producers Council (NPPC) and the American Farm Bureau Federation, have both filed lawsuits against Proposition 12, arguing that it violates the Commerce Clause of the U.S. Constitution by imposing regulations on out-of-state pork producers. These ongoing lawsuits have significant implications for the future of Proposition 12 and similar regulations in other states. Overall, the unintended economic consequences of Proposition 12 on farmers and pork consumers are complex and multifaceted.

Another study by Choe et al. (2021) analyzed potential effects of Proposition 12 on animal welfare, pork production costs, and consumer prices. The study found that Proposition 12 regulations will improve animal welfare and increase pork production costs by up to 30%. The increased cost will likely be passed on to consumers, leading to

higher pork prices. The study also noted that Proposition 12 regulations lead to reduced pork production in California and increased pork imports from other states. A study by Olynk and Wolf (2021) analyzed potential economic impacts of Proposition 12 on the pork industry in California and other states. The study found that Proposition 12 regulations will significantly reduce pig farming and pork production in California, which will result in higher pork prices for consumers. However, the study also noted that the regulations will create opportunities for pork producers in other states to increase their production and supply pork to California consumers.

In addition to these studies, there have been several editorials and opinion pieces on the unintended consequences of Proposition 12. For example, an editorial in the *Los Angeles Times* (2021) argued that Proposition 12 regulations will lead to a reduction in pork production in California and an increase in pork imports from other states, which will undermine the goals of the regulation. The editorial also noted that Proposition 12 regulations will lead to higher pork prices for consumers, particularly low-income earners. Overall, the literature suggests that Proposition 12 regulations can potentially improve animal welfare but will also lead to higher pork production costs and reduced production levels.

These unintended consequences have negative economic impacts on farmers and pork consumers in California and other states. Policymakers and stakeholders must carefully consider these unintended consequences when implementing laws and policies affecting the pork industry. While the regulation may improve animal welfare, it will also lead to higher costs of pork production and reduced production levels. Policymakers and

stakeholders must carefully consider these unintended consequences when implementing laws and policies affecting the pork industry.

Effects of California Proposition 12 on Farm Industries

According to the *Los Angeles Times*, reports reflected that California's Proposition 12 has led to uncertainty and concern among pork producers in the state, who are struggling to comply with the law's animal welfare requirements. The increased space requirement for hogs, which became effective as of 2022, has led to higher costs for farmers, who are unable to compete with out-of-state producers which are not subject to the same regulations. This highlights how implementing Proposition 12 reduces pork production in California, significantly impacting the state's pork industry.

Some farmers considered moving their operations out of state to avoid increased compliance costs of Proposition 12. Therefore, implementing California's Proposition 12 significantly impacted the state's pork industry, leading some farmers to consider moving their operations out of state to avoid increased compliance costs with laws of animal welfare requirements. Recent literature suggested that implementing Proposition 12 impacts the pork industry in California and other animal agriculture industries. A report published by the NPPC stated that the increased costs of compliance with Proposition 12 led to a decline in investment and expansion plans by farmers in the state. However, the report further highlighted higher production costs that led to a reduction in the supply of pork products, which resulted in higher consumer prices (NPPC, 2021). Furthermore, a study by the University of California, Davis, found that implementing Proposition 12 significantly reduced egg production in California. This study indicated increased space

requirements for egg-laying hens, which led to take effect in 2022, to higher costs for farmers, who may not be able to compete with out-of-state producers. This led to a decrease in egg production in California and a corresponding increase in egg prices for consumers (Sumner, 2021). In addition, a report by the American Farm Bureau Federation (2019) suggested that implementing Proposition 12 conforms to a patchwork of different animal welfare regulations across states, making it difficult for farmers to comply with varying requirements and leading to confusion among consumers. This potentially hurt the entire animal agriculture industry in California and across the country. Recent literature suggested that implementing Proposition 12 impacted California's pork and poultry industries and the beef industry.

According to a California Cattlemen's Association report, implementing Proposition 12 increased production costs for beef producers, who must comply with new animal welfare requirements. The report further highlighted that the increased production costs made it difficult for California beef producers to compete with out-of-state producers, subject to different regulations. This led to a reduced supply of beef products in California and increased beef prices for consumers. (California Cattlemen's Association, 2020).

Moreover, implementing Proposition 12 raised concerns about the potential impact on the California economy. A study by the Agricultural Issues Center (AIC) at the University of California, Davis, estimated that implementing Proposition 12 implements a decline in California's gross domestic product (GDP) by \$1.6 billion and a loss of over 10,000 jobs in the state's animal agriculture industry. In this study, I further highlight that

implementing Proposition 12 will potentially conform to a shift of animal agriculture production to other states with less stringent animal welfare regulations (AIC, 2021). Overall, while implementation of Proposition 12 was positive for animal welfare, it also made significant challenges and uncertainties for farmers and the animal agriculture industry in California. The full impact of Proposition 12 on the state's economy and animal agriculture industry remains to be seen. Furthermore, implementing Proposition 12 demonstrates positive implications for animal welfare. Still, it has also caused significant challenges and uncertainties for farmers and the animal agriculture industry in California and beyond.

Effects of California Proposition 12 on Low-Income Communities

Additionally, Proposition 12 required California farmers to provide more space for egg-laying hens, breeding pigs, and veal calves. While the law aimed to improve animal welfare, it had unintended economic consequences on the pork industry in California, which affected low-income communities. According to a study conducted by the Farm Bureau, implementing Proposition 12 increased the cost of pork production by at least 50%, causing a shortage and increase in prices of pork products. This price increase disproportionately affected low-income communities that relied on pork as a primary source of protein. Furthermore, the study also revealed that Proposition 12 reduced the number of hogs raised in California, increasing transportation costs and ultimately pork prices. This increase in pork prices significantly impacted low-income communities, who had to reduce their pork consumption or switch to less healthy, cheaper meat alternatives. Furthermore, a study by the NPPC found that the

implementation of Proposition 12 resulted in a reduction in pork production, leading to a shortage of pork products. This shortage also disproportionately affected low-income communities, struggling to afford alternative protein sources. In conclusion, implementing Proposition 12 provoked unintended economic consequences that disproportionately affected low-income communities relying on pork as a primary source of protein. These increases in prices and shortages of pork products forced these communities to reduce their pork consumption and to conform to cheaper and less healthy meats.

Additionally, studies relating to the research question provided compelling evidence of unintended consequences of Proposition 12 on the pork industry. Alternatively, the approach used by researchers examined cost production, price increase, product shortages, and piglet mortality in a meaningful comprehensive understanding about the potential impacts of the law.

Furthermore, economic impacts of Proposition 12 on the pork industry continues to be a concern for many. A recent article by the *Los Angeles Times* reported that implementing Proposition 12 resulted in a decline in the number of pig farmers in California. The article revealed that many small-scale farmers were forced to shut down their businesses due to increased costs of complying with the law. Moreover, this further impacted low-income communities, who relied on these farmers for their pork resources. The National Bureau of Economic Research found that implementing Proposition 12 provoked a significant decrease in the number of hogs raised in California. In this study, I discovered that the law resulted in an increase in the price of pork products, with prices

rising as much as 15%. Moreover, price increases have disproportionately affected low-income communities struggling to afford alternative protein sources.

Despite the concerns regarding the economic impact of Proposition 12, supporters of the law argued that it is necessary to improve animal welfare. In addition, The Guardian highlights the positive impact of Proposition 12 on animal welfare that has significantly improved the living conditions of egg-laying hens, breeding pigs, and veal calves in California. Consequently, these improvements are applauded by animal welfare advocates, who argued that the law has set precedent for other states to follow.

In knowing this, ongoing debates surrounding Proposition 12 made aware complex trade-offs between animal welfare and economic considerations as California continues to implement the law, essential to monitor impacts on both the pork industry and low-income communities.

A recent report by the University of California's AIC shed further light on the economic impact of Proposition 12. The report estimated that implementing Proposition 12 will result in a significant increase in the price of pork products, with prices expected to rise by as much as 60% in some cases. The report also highlighted the potential for job losses in the pork industry, with as many as 1,000 jobs expected to be lost due to increased production costs. Furthermore, the AIC report noted that the increase in pork prices would have a ripple effect on other parts of the food industry, leading to higher prices for different meat products and potentially even fruits and vegetables. This further exacerbates the impact on low-income communities who already struggle to afford healthy food options. However, supporters of Proposition 12 argued that the law is

necessary to improve animal welfare and that the economic impact would be temporary. In a recent op-ed in the San Francisco Chronicle, animal welfare advocates argue that the law is a step in the right direction toward creating a more humane food system and noted that similar laws have been implemented in other countries without significant economic consequences.

In conclusion, the ongoing debate surrounding Proposition 12 highlighted complex trade-offs between animal welfare and economic considerations while the law has improved animal welfare, its impact on the pork industry and low-income communities cannot be ignored as California continues implementing the law and monitoring its impact on all stakeholders.

Summary and Conclusion

The central theme of this study is unintended consequences of California Proposition 12, which is currently affecting food sustainability of low-income communities. The literature review presented in this chapter justifies that this law has significant economic implications on farm industries, and presents a threat to the environment, humanities, and sustainability. However, there was a gap in the literature regarding whether policymakers anticipated such consequences during the formulation of Proposition 12 and whether potential impacts on low-income communities were ever assessed. This study fills that gap by reexamining the designing stage of California Proposition 12. Also, the research methodology involves obtaining and analyzing secondary qualitative data on the policy processes toward understanding the issue better. Chapter 3 further discusses the qualitative method, selected research design, data

collection, data sources, and sampling strategy. Chapter 3 also describes the procedures for data analysis, ethical considerations, and data protection.

Chapter 3: Research Method

Introduction

The purpose of this qualitative case study of California's Proposition 12 Law was to investigate how policy's developers and advocates considered needs of low socioeconomic Hispanics, Pacific Islanders, African Americans, and Asian Americans communities, and pig farmers during its formulation. This study explored how policy developers assessed Proposition 12, and possible impacts on low-SES pork consumers and pig farmers. Chapter 3 included a detailed discussion of the research methods for gathering, analyzing, and interpreting the study's findings.

Research Design and Rationale

This study focused on the following research questions:

- What considerations were given to the needs of low-income communities during the formulation of California's Proposition 12 by policymakers and advocates?
- How did the policymakers and advocates of Proposition 12 evaluate its possible impacts on low-income Hispanics, Pacific Islanders, African Americans, and Asian American communities, as well as pig farmers, during its formulation?

The central concept was Proposition 12, a law passed in California in 2018 to prohibit the cruel confinement of pigs, egg-laying hens, and veal calves, and unintended consequences, referring to the unanticipated effects of government actions through policy formulation. The research tradition was a study of a qualitative case study, which

involved conducting a rigorous and in-depth exploration of a phenomenon within a specific context bound by time and place. The rationale chosen for this tradition was secondary data inclusion from multiple sources, such as websites, archives, government reports, animal farm records, media accounts, briefs, white papers, and advocacy memos.

Role of the Researcher

For this study, the role of the researcher was as the instrument in attaining secondary data analysis. In this role, I gathered and analyzed data primarily through secondary sources, I kept a reflexive journal and took analytic memos throughout the study to manage bias. This approach reflected on the role as a data analyst, and how I interpreted the data experiences of those affected by Proposition 12 Law. Also, in this study regarding secondary data, I used existing data sources that other researchers have already collected.

Methodology

Data Source

In this study, I selected relevant materials from a broad spectrum of available secondary data resources utilized to explore and investigate the California Proposition 12 Law, and whether any unintended consequences of its implementation were adequately considered during the policy design and formulation process. The Appendix includes a list of proponents and opponents of Proposition 12 with their websites, from which such documentation will be derived for review and analysis.

Sampling Strategy and Criteria

The sampling strategy for this research study was purposeful sampling, which involved selecting specific documents to meet the criteria for inclusion. The criteria for secondary data sources for this study on unintended consequences of Proposition 12 affecting low-income communities in California should include records that are relevant to addressing the research questions. The exact date of the implementation of Proposition 12 is November 8, 2018, spanning currently. The organizations issuing the data should be reputable and recognized as authoritative sources in their respective fields. This criterion ensures that data collected is high quality, and relevant to the research questions. In the sampling strategy and criteria, I implemented purposeful sampling which is significantly utilized in qualitative research for the identification and selection of information that is rich in cases related to the phenomenon of interest. Although there are several different purposeful sampling strategies, criterion sampling appears to be used most in implementation research before the study. Therefore, I defined the research questions and identified relevant sources that included online databases, published resources, government sources, and commercial data providers. I narrowed the research list of information to access the most significant and relevant data applicable to the research study. I formulated two journals to check data and collect all existing data that related to the research study from similar sources. I went online and typed in specific keywords as unintended consequences, intended consequences, animal rights affecting low-income communities, California laws and farm animals, secondary data on California laws on

farm animals, pork and meat products affected by Proposition 12, low-income communities of ethnic races affected by California laws (Palinkas, et al., 2015).

Procedures for Identifying Data

Various sources of data were utilized to conduct thorough study. These sources included a systematic search of industry magazines, government reports, annual organizational reports, archival data reports, news reports, reports from animal organizations, reports on animal welfare, and any other secondary data sources that may be required. Other essential data sources included government reports and data on the implementation of the regulations, industry publications, news articles, and data on economic and social indicators for affected communities and farmers in California.

Saturation and Sample Size

Saturation is the point at which collecting additional data yields only latest information or insights related to answering research questions. I achieved data saturation by gathering data until no new insights or information related to the research questions were able to be obtained. The sample size for this study depended on the number of relevant and reliable secondary data resources that met the inclusion criteria. The goal was to obtain a sufficient sample size that comprehensively covered the research questions and insights.

Instrumentation

In this study, as the researcher, I was the primary instrumentation for data collection and analysis. This research study is based on secondary data from reliable resources published within the last 5 years. In my role as the primary research instrument

in this study, I implemented thematic analysis. Furthermore, secondary data resources were synthesized and examined to determine authenticity and reputability for this study. The specific documents used were based on relevance to the research questions.

Data Analysis

The data analysis method I used in this study was a thematic analysis. This method was beneficial for this secondary data analysis case study because it allowed the researcher to analyze textual and visual data to identify themes and patterns. In conducting secondary data, I committed spending immersive amounts of time on the research data (Hassan, 2023). Mainly, I worked formulating consistently the analysis that pertained to data organization, coding, identification of patterns, categorization, and theme development. I also sought patterns in the datasets of documents, coded them, clustered those codes into categories, and arranged them around central emergent themes to conduct the secondary data analysis for this case study. In addition, data were arranged, coded, and classified during the initial analytical phase using a coding table (Goldsmith, 2021). The a priori codes were based on Merton's (1936) causes of unanticipated consequences that enabled further categorization and thematization of the data. Preliminary sample coding is presented in Table 1.

Table 1*Preliminary Sample Coding*

| A priori code | Description of concept | Reference | Categories | Themes |
|---------------|---|---|--------------|--------------------------------------|
| IGN | Ignorance. Lack of awareness or knowledge about the potential consequences of a policy. | Lack of awareness or knowledge about the potential unintended consequences of Proposition 12 during formulation and implementation. | Unawareness | Knowledge |
| ERR | Error. Unintentional mistakes or misjudgments in policy decisions. | Unintentional mistakes or misjudgments made during the formulation and implementation of Proposition 12 may lead to unintended consequences. | Mistake | Imperfection |
| INT | Immediate Interests. Prioritization of short-term gains over long-term consequences. | Prioritization of short-term gains or immediate economic interests over long-term consequences for low-income stakeholders and interstate commerce. | Urgency | Enthusiasm |
| VAL | Basic Values. Alignment or misalignment of policy decisions with societal norms and values. | The alignment or misalignment of Proposition 12 with societal norms and values, including its impact on social justice and animal welfare. | Ethics | Integrity |
| SEP | Policy influences behavior. | Expectations of unintended consequences in policy. | Human values | Learning from consequences in policy |

Issues of Trustworthiness

To ensure the credibility of this qualitative study, I selected and sought authoritative sources reflecting on various stakeholders' perspectives on Proposition 12. In employing peer debriefing, I discussed the relevance and authenticity of the documents reviewed with a colleague. Finally, I applied the technique of negative case analysis, investigating disconfirming instances and pieces of evidence.

To ensure transferability, I described the study context, protocols, data sources, and analysis techniques. I also implemented an audit trail and thick descriptions to document the research process and findings to ensure dependability. This process involved keeping detailed records of all research activities, including data collection,

analysis, and interpretation, to ensure that results are repeatable and consistent across different contexts.

To ensure confirmability, I used reflexivity and triangulation to reduce bias and ensure objectivity. This involved reflecting on personal biases and assumptions and incorporating multiple perspectives and data sources to validate the findings.

Ethical Procedures

Prior to the commencement of this study using secondary data, I obtained proper Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval and followed ethical guidelines with the approval number of 06-24-1028258. This included obtaining institutional permissions and ensuring that data collected will be stored and accessed securely. Additionally, data protection was my top priority when managing secondary data.

Nonetheless, I stored the data safely and ensured I only have access to it. Once the research project was completed, I guaranteed that all secondary data was stored securely and will be maintained for 5 years and then disposed of ethically. I understand that secondary data typically does not involve direct participation by individuals, so there are no participants to protect, and it was essential to ensure that data were respected ethically and adequately cited to maintain integrity in the study.

Summary

Chapter 3 addressed the methodological aspects of the study, which focused on the rationale of this case study research design as it pertained to secondary data analysis. This study covered data collection methods, sources, sampling strategy, and data saturation to ensure comprehensive insight. Thus, Chapter 3 presented a preliminary code

table to illustrate the thematic analysis approach that utilized secondary data and emphasized research ethics and confidentiality of the IRB approval process. Chapter 4 outlines the data collection and analysis conducted following the dissertation committee's approval from Walden University's IRB. It details the implementation of the approved methodologies and the insights gained through this research.

Chapter 4: Results

Introduction

The purpose of this qualitative case study was to examine to what extent policymakers and policy advocates considered needs of low-income, nonwhite communities during the formulation of Proposition 12, as well as potential impact of this legislation of these communities. This study was guided by two primary research questions:

RQ1: What consideration was given by policymakers and policy advocates to the needs of low-income communities during the formulation of Proposition 12?

RQ2: How did policymakers and policy advocates assess the potential impact of Proposition 12 on low-income nonwhite communities during its formulation?

Using a qualitative case analysis of secondary data, I sought to uncover broader social implications of Proposition 12, particularly in context of economic accessibility, food security, and social equity.

In addition, Chapter 4 introduces findings in a structured manner, beginning with an overview of unintended consequences of Proposition 12. This chapter is organized into several key sections, starting with an introduction that establishes purpose of research and organization of findings. Subsequent sections focus on how policymakers and policy advocates addressed needs of low-income communities and how they sought to mitigate any adverse effects, particularly regarding rising food prices. This chapter also includes an analysis of data reliability and trustworthiness to ensure credibility of study findings.

Setting

In this research study, I did not recruit interview participants or utilize any external or internal organizations. I used qualitative data, internal data, published resources, unpublished resources, and online resources. During the data collection process, I gathered information from 52 distinct resources, including organizations listed in the Appendix. (see organizations listed in the Appendix). I also performed online secondary data research collection in the Alameda, County area, in the city of Hayward, California communities in my residence. Further, I used my personal laptop as the primary data instrument to collect data, and external resources at the Alameda County public library. I formulated and integrated with specific keywords like Proposition 12, FABI animal cruelty, ASPCA, farm animal act laws in California, food and low-income communities, low-income communities and pork, outcomes of pork and food prices in Alameda County. In this study, I did not have to administer consent form or research recruitment fliers. On the contrary, I implemented unrestricted access to secondary data which was easy to access. To attain credibility and reliability of research data, I read, reread, and searched thoroughly for scholarly and academic data that aligned with the research questions. After screening websites, social media platforms, archives and attaining research data from the public library, I processed and organized the research data, and attaining scholarly and academic resources required a more strategic and logical approach in design. Furthermore, this response resulted in constructing many phrases and patterns as advocates for animals, the slaughtering of pigs, the increase in food pork prices, children, and low-income families in need of pork and eggs, laws in California on

animal welfare, and the United States and farmers on meat product prices. From this strategy, I documented resources that were credible and significant to the research study and documented unnecessary resources that were not sufficient to the research study.

In addition, as the primary instrument in this study, I took the role of participant researcher in assessing the data through a case analysis scenario. This specific approach was necessary due to research unpredictability towards attaining research data specifically required for the study in engaging technology that will delay the data collection process. On the contrary, this study's main purpose was to avoid the interviewing process and recruitment approaches, due to the nature of the study being secondary research. In this study, I used the instruments of pen, pencil, and paper to formulate my data coding, data categories and sets, and the taking of notes.

In addition, I had to reread and rewrite data multiples of times to understand how the data applied to the gap in literature, the purpose statement, and the research questions. In the setting of data collection and analysis, I performed actions in my own private home in Hayward, California, in a private room in my home. The research study was not compromised or exposed to any external factors, and I was the only person conducting and maintaining possession of all the data material. Further, when data became appropriate for the study I performed decontextualization techniques and recontextualization as I illustrated repetition constantly throughout the data collection, and coding processes. In this study, I examined all transcriptions of data resources and notes, line-by-line for data completeness. This study reached thick amounts of robust data

justifying trustworthiness, and transferability while applying thematic analysis towards the unintended consequences theory in qualitative data analysis as a case study.

Demographics

This study focused primarily on examining experiences of low-income households, which demonstrated a heavy reliance on affordable meat sources, particularly pork (Davis, 2021). The findings indicated that many individuals from economically disadvantaged communities continue to face significant barriers to accessing nutritious food at affordable prices (Lewis, 2020). The increased cost of pork resulting from Proposition 12 further provoked financial strain on these populations, limiting their ability to maintain a balanced diet. As food affordability is a central concern for low-income households, the shift in pork pricing due to regulatory changes directly impacted their dietary choices and nutritional well-being (Stewart, 2021). Additionally, the analysis incorporates key demographic variables, including (a) race/ethnicity, (b) income level, (c) geographic location, (d) food security status, and (e) employment in agriculture-related sectors, to better understand the factors influencing access to nutritious food.

Figure 1

Demographic Variables for Low-Income Households in California as at the Formulation and Enactment of Proposition 12

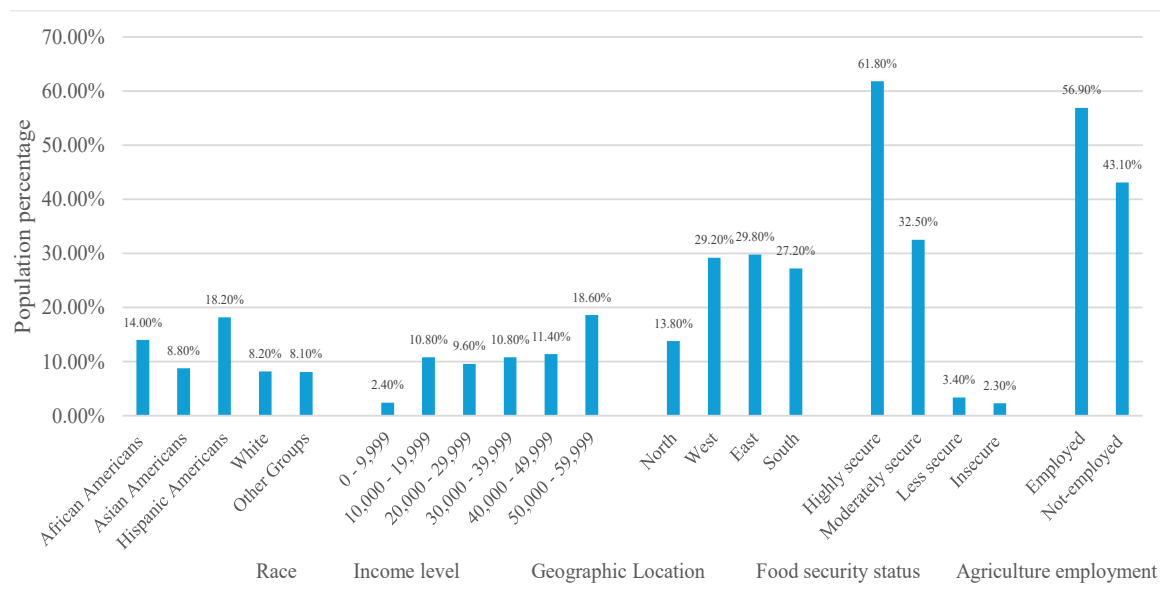


Figure 1 details the demographic characteristics of focus in the proposed study, which include race, income level, geographic location, food security status, and employment in agricultural-related sectors for the population of low-income households in California at the time of the formulation and enactment of Proposition 12. According to the chart in Figure 1, the majority of low-income households in California significantly affected by the implementation of Proposition 12 were Hispanic Americans who form 18.2% of the total population of low-income households in the state. All households in California with a reported annual income of less than \$60,000 are lower class, being affected by the increased cost of pork due to the implementation of the regulation. From the chart above, it is evident that the majority of those households lived in Eastern and

Western California. Nonetheless, only 13.8% of them lived in Northern counties within the state. Despite being regarded as low-income households, 61.8% of them had a high level of food security, while only 2.3% experienced food insecurity. The high level of food security among lower-income households in California can be attributed to the fact that they earned their income from agricultural-related employment opportunities.

According to Figure 1, 56.90% of those households had one or more members employed in agriculture-related sectors, whereas 43.10% had none of their members employed in those sectors.

The Impact on Small-Scale Pig Farmers

This study incorporated data from pig farmers across California, many of whom operated smaller-scale farms (Thompson, 2022). These farmers struggled to comply with the new welfare standards set by Proposition 12, encountering challenges that included increased operational costs and necessary adjustments in infrastructure (Evans, 2021). In addition, the demographic profile of these farmers revealed that a substantial proportion managed small, family-owned operations, were particularly vulnerable to financial instability caused by stringent legislative changes (White, 2022). Additionally, I discovered that these small-scale farmers encountered barriers in meeting the mandated requirements, which ultimately limited their ability to supply pork at competitive prices in the marketplace (Smith, 2020).

Policymakers' and Advocates' Considerations

Policymakers and policy advocates made efforts to mitigate the adverse effects of Proposition 12 on low-income communities and farmers. Measures such as targeted

subsidies, stakeholder consultations, and policy adaptations were explored to minimize economic hardships associated with compliance costs and food pricing (Abbott, 2022). Muchmore, research highlighted that these interventions were insufficient in fully addressing the unintended consequences that pertain to the legislation.

Participant Demographics and Characteristics

As the study relied on secondary data, there were no direct human participants recruited. Instead, demographic data was extracted from sources such as the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), the CDFA, and national research organizations. These reports provided insights into income levels, racial and ethnic backgrounds, household food security, and economic conditions of the affected populations. In the study, I also targeted the population of low-income nonwhite communities affected by economic impacts of Proposition 12.

Data were collected from the target population of low-income nonwhite communities affected by the economic impacts of Proposition 12. Furthermore, primary data sources evolved from USDA (2020), California Food Policy Council (2021), and Food Research and Action Center (2022). Data were collected from 37 sources, including 15 government reports, 12 peer-reviewed journal articles, six policy briefs, and four case studies. The collected data spanned from 2018 to 2022, providing a longitudinal perspective on the economic, social, and cultural impacts of the legislation. In addition, I categorized data into themes using thematic analysis, identifying patterns in policy effectiveness, affordability of pork, and socioeconomic disparities (Saldana, 2021). Additionally, the location, frequency, and duration of secondary data collection was

gathered from online databases such as ProQuest, Google Scholar, PubMed, and government agencies including the USDA, CDFR, and Bureau of Labor Statistics. However, data collection occurred over a period of 3 months, with multiple phases (a) Phase 1, the initial identification of sources (3 weeks); (b) Phase 2, screening and verification of data credibility (4 weeks); and (c) Phase 3, thematic categorization and analysis (5 weeks).

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Policymakers' and Advocates' Considerations

However, policymakers and policy advocates made efforts to mitigate the adverse effects of Proposition 12 on low-income communities and farmers. Measures such as targeted subsidies, stakeholder consultations, and policy adaptations were explored to minimize economic hardships associated with compliance costs and food pricing (Abbott,

2022). Muchmore, research highlighted that these interventions were insufficient in fully addressing the unintended consequences that pertain to the legislation.

Data Collection

The data collection process for this study was conducted in alignment with rigorous qualitative research methodologies to where I ensured transferability, credibility, dependability, and confirmability as outlined in the APA 7th edition manual Lincoln and Guba (1985). This study employs secondary data analysis, with data sourced from government reports, peer-reviewed journal articles, policy documents, industry reports, and qualitative case studies relevant to the effects of Proposition 12 on low-income nonwhite communities.

Data Recording Methods

As primary instrument to this study, I recorded all research data by hand, taking notes, writing reflective journaling, constructing data on a laptop, saving research data into organized folders to document patterns and researcher observations, ensuring confirmability, maintaining access to NVivo data program availability, but was not primarily needed in the study (Hasson, 2023). Therefore, I followed the original data collection plan outlined in Chapter 3, following variations conformed in the study on the expansion of sources, where more government reports were planned for analysis. Thus, due to limited publicly available data on low-income communities, I applied additional academic and industry reports into the study (Capano & Howlett, 2019). In this study, I did not place emphasis on case studies. However, there were four case studies included in

this study as support resources to bring awareness to the qualitative perspectives on economic hardships and food access (Stewart, 2021).

Unusual Circumstances Encountered

Limited demographic breakdowns in the study revealed that some government reports did not explicitly separate racial and income-based data that required cross-referencing multiple sources (Olynk & Wolf, 2021). Moreover, legislative changes during data collection reveal ongoing policy modifications in California's agricultural laws that continue to evolve into new reports that were integrated midway through data collection integration (Formica, 2021). In addition, economic shifts due to inflation enforced changes in food pricing trends from 2020 to 2022, affecting affordability metrics, and requiring adjustments in trend analysis (Wallace, 2021). This comprehensive data collection process ensured that findings in the study were robust, dependable, and methodologically sound. This study leveraged secondary qualitative data from multiple authoritative resources, applying thematic analysis towards identifying socioeconomic patterns, and conducting to the APA 7th edition standards, and Walden University's IRB standards ensuring credibility in academic reporting, and transparency.

Data Analysis

Using data analysis processes described by Saldana (2021) and the codebook template (see Appendix), qualitative data was analyzed by using an iterative process to code and recode the data based on like ideas. Data was organized into subcategories to where themes that emerged from the data developed to align with the research problem and research questions. In the data analysis plan, I used thematic analysis approaches to

move inductively from coded units to larger representatives, including categories and themes. In addition, I utilized thematic analysis with secondary data inductively from coded units to including categories and themes such as economic, social, cultural, unintended for California Proposition 12 unintended consequences for pork sale laws affecting low-income communities and farmers. This study integrated Merton's five effects (Merton, 1936) towards categorizing and interpreting data providing a comprehensive understanding of multifaceted impacts about the legislation over specified period of times. This conceptualization allowed the enabling of systematic identification of themes and patterns found within the secondary data analysis. In addition, by spending immersive amounts of time on research data, the analysis formed constructively into data organization, coding, identification of patterns, categorization, and theme development (Hassan, 2023).

In this part of the study, I focused on repetition, and thorough processing of data collecting, coding, and interpretation to ensure a comprehensive understanding of the multifaceted impacts of the legislation (Solomon et al., 2021). In addition, I detailed data from various resources spanning over several years, which allowed the identification of key themes, and categories essential for capturing nuanced implications of Proposition 12 on targeted communities. Furthermore, as I continued data analysis, specific codes, categories, and themes emerged from the data were described, quotations were used as needed to emphasize the importance of emergent elements. Additionally, from the data analysis specific codes were assigned to relevant data, which were grouped into categories and further developed into overarching themes. This emergence of patterns

and insights from the data provided a comprehensive understanding of multifaceted impacts of the studied phenomenon. Emergent elements, through their specific codes, categories, and themes, places emphasis on the importance of capturing nuanced and interconnected aspects of data, enabling a rich and in-depth exploration of the research topic. Nonetheless, the process involved meticulously examining data towards identifying recurring patterns and themes, coding the data, and clustering the codes into meaningful categories. Significantly, during the meticulous examination of the data and the identification of recurring patterns and themes, it was found that California Proposition 12 had unintended consequences on pork sales for low-income communities and farmers (Dwyer et al., 2022).

Importantly to realize is that, by coding the data and clustering the codes for meaningful categories, several key findings emerged. The analysis revealed that the legislation had a significant impact on the affordability of pork for low-income families, as the rapid laws designed to benefit pigs before sales, did not fully consider the financial implications for these communities (Olynk & Wolf, 2021). Additionally, the study highlighted challenges faced by farmers in adapting to the new regulations and the resulting implications for their livelihoods (Choe et al., 2021). Furthermore, the analysis shed light on the struggles of low-income communities in affording pork due to the legislation, providing a comprehensive understanding of the human impact of Proposition 12 (Stewart, 2021).

Overall, the data analysis revealed complex and interconnected impacts on both farmers and low-income communities, emphasizing the multifaceted nature of the

legislation's consequences (Olynk & Wolf, 2021). Furthermore, the analysis focused on qualities of discrepant cases and how they contributed to the overall analysis in the study. The analysis in this study focused on the qualities of discrepant cases towards understanding how contributions to the overall analysis of the human impact of Proposition 12 on farmers applied to this study. Examining cases deviated from general patterns and themes identified in the data analysis aimed a comprehensive understanding of the diverse effects of the legislation.

These discrepant cases provided valuable insights into the varying experiences and perspectives of farmers affected by Proposition 12, shedding light on nuanced challenges and implications for their livelihoods. In addition, considering these cases, the analysis was able to capture the complexities and real-world implications of the legislation on a broader spectrum (Capano & Howlett, 2019), enriching the overall understanding of its impact on farmers. Additionally, these cases were factored in by carefully examining outliers, exceptions, or unique instances that deviated from the identified patterns and themes.

The unintended consequences of California Proposition 12 on low-income communities (Stewart, 2021) and farmers due to the new pork sale laws resulted in several noteworthy cases. These cases included challenges related to the affordability of pork for low-income families, as the rapid implementation of laws designed to benefit pigs before sale did not fully consider the financial burden on these communities. Additionally, farmers faced difficulties in adapting to the new regulations, which had significant implications for their livelihoods.

The struggles of low-income communities in affording pork due to the legislation also highlighted socioeconomic impacts of Proposition 12. In addition, these cases underscored multifaceted effects of the legislation on both farmers and low-income communities, emphasizing complexities and real-world implications of Proposition 12 unintended consequences. The examination of Proposition 12 impact on low-income communities and farmers involved identifying what are the projected outliers, exceptions, and unique instances deviating from identified patterns and themes in the study.

In addition, I carefully studied these cases to understand the factors contributing to their divergence from general trends observed in the data (Crowe et al., 2011). Additionally, analyzing these outliers, specific exceptions, and unique instances, this study sought to gain insight into the diverse and nuanced effects of Proposition 12 on low-income communities and farmers. This significant stance allowed comprehensive understandings of varied experiences and impacts concerning the legislation, considering unprecedented circumstances that shaped these specific cases which were analyzed to understand their significance and relevance to overall findings.

However, the significant findings regarding unintended consequences of California Proposition 12 on low-income communities and farmers' pork sales showed various effects of the legislation on farmers outside the state of California (National Pork Producers v. Ross, 2022). Additionally, affordability for pork in the venue of low-income families was found to be primarily impacted by rapid implementations of laws designed to benefit pigs before sales, did not fully take into factors about the financial implications for these communities (DeBiase & Dodey, 2021). Nonetheless, research revealed

challenges by farmers in adapting to the new regulations, livelihood concerns about implications for their sustainability (California Cattlemen's Association, 2020). These findings are highly relevant to overall understandings of the societal and national outcomes of Proposition 12, on hit it reflects on real-world implications on both farmers and low-income communities.

By providing insights about the challenges faced by these groups, findings reveal the need for comprehensive assessments of unintended consequences legislation, and importances of considering diverse impacts on different segments of the population. Also, unintended consequences of Proposition 12 in California affecting farmers and low-income communities resulted in segments of the population facing marketing and production inquiries (Hasson, 2023). Specifically, low-income families experienced difficulties in affording pork due to the legislation, highlighting the financial burden placed on this segment of the population, and farmers cannot adapt to new regulations, which generate negative implications on livelihoods and agricultural practices.

Problems in Proposition 12 also affected the logic towards how low-income families are to provide themselves with proper nutritional foods that accompany animal products with fruits and vegetables of many plant varieties. In addition, policymakers meant well to make it beneficial for the protection of farm animals and chickens and hens, however, unintended consequences occurred unexpectedly out of a good means (Wallace, 2021). On the contrary Proposition 12 mandates made it difficult for national farmers to adapt towards the reconstructing of animal confinements to more beneficial ones (Formica, 2021).

I examined the 2018, voter-approved California ballot initiative known as Proposition 12 (Prop 12), which significantly impacted livestock housing standards and market compliance regulations. This initiative required that farmers provide a minimum floor space to egg-laying hens, veal calves, and breeding pigs. Specifically, the law mandated that stores within California could only sell eggs, veal, and pork products that were sourced from animals raised under these square footage standards (CDFA, 2022).

Research discovery revealed that two critical compliance deadlines were associated with Proposition 12 mandates in which the first deadline, took effect on January 1, 2020, requiring farmers raising egg-laying hens and veal calves to meet new space requirements. Concurrently, retailers were obligated to verify that their egg and veal products met Proposition 12 guidelines. The second compliance phase, was effective on January 1, 2022, imposing stricter measures on egg-laying hens which were required to be housed in cage-free facilities, and hog producers also had to meet specific spatial requirements for breeding pigs. At this point, pork and egg products and the producers of the markets that sold in California needed to be fully compliant with these updated standards (CDFA, 2022).

However, since its enactment, Proposition 12 has faced intense legal scrutiny, particularly regarding pork-related provisions. Due to ongoing litigation, enforcements of Proposition 12 as it applies to whole pork sales remain suspended. The legal challenges are twofold. The first case, held in federal court, revolves around the Dormant Commerce Clause—a constitutional principle that restricts states from placing undue burdens on interstate commerce. The second case, situated in state court, pertains to issues of

statutory interpretation and administrative procedures (National Agricultural Law Center, 2023). These cases underscore the complexity of implementing state-based animal welfare laws within a national and constitutional framework. Although Proposition 12 was designed to enhance animal welfare and inform consumer choice, its full impact remains uncertain due to ongoing judicial review and its implications for commerce and regulatory authority.

Furthermore, I make aware that the policies should aim to foster a comprehensive understanding of multifaceted implications of Proposition 12 on both low-income communities and farmers. Additionally, this factor will involve the establishment of support programs, economic assistance, and targeted initiatives towards addressing specific challenges faced by these groups as a result of the legislation. Overall, the development of policies will also prioritize the equitable and sustainable impact of the legislation on low-income communities and farmers, taking into consideration their diverse needs and circumstances. During the initial analytical phase, data was arranged, coded, and classified using a coding table (Saldana, 2021). In this study, a priori codes were based on Merton's (1936) causes of unanticipated consequences, providing a framework for further categorization and schematization of the data. Furthermore, analytical phases of data for California Proposition 12 unintended consequences of pork sales involved arranging, coding, and classifying data based on a priori codes derived from Merton's causes and unanticipated consequences. This tactic provided a framework for further categorization and schematization of data, allowing systematic and structured analysis. Therefore, implementing Merton's theoretical framework, analytical phases

aimed to identify both the intended and unintended effects of Proposition 12, allowing comprehensive awareness of its impacts on farmers and low-income communities (Choe et al., 2021). This approach benefited the organization of data into meaningful categories, enabling a thorough exploration of implications and its unanticipated consequences.

Evidence of Trustworthiness

This case qualitative case study on unintended consequences of California's Proposition 12 laws utilized several strategies towards establishing credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability of findings. For the most, reflexive journaling was employed throughout the research process, from data extraction to analysis, and interpretation, to account for potential bias and provide a record of decision-making and interpretation to account for potential biases, and to provide a record of decision-making and reflections (Hasson, 2023).

This approach contributed to the credibility of the study by ensuring transparency and self-awareness in the research process (Hasson, 2023). To further enhance credibility the study applied Merton's theoretical framework to analyze the unintended consequences of Proposition 12. The framework benefited in understanding both intended and unexpected outcomes of the policy, contributing to the overall trustworthiness of the study's results (Sumner, 2018). Additionally, analytic memorizing and coding to the point of saturation were employed to establish credibility. The study reached saturation after a thorough analysis of data from the year's 2018 to 2022 providing confidence that the identified consequences accurately reflected the impact of Proposition 12 on various societal groups and the agricultural industry during that period

(Olynk & Wolf, 2021). The approach contributed to the internal validation and trustworthiness of the study's results. In terms of transferability, I found that while full transferability to other policy contents may not be advised, the identified consequences and their underlying causes provided valuable insights into the complexities of policy formulation and outcomes during that specific time limit (Capano & Howlett, 2019). In addition, to establish dependability, I utilized intercoder reliability to ensure consistency in the analysis process (Crowe et al., 2011).

Of course, this process involved cross verifying analysis with a colleague familiar with policy evaluation and decision-making (Dwyer et al., 2022). I also refined interpretations and provided confidence in the applied approach, contributing to the dependability of the study's findings (Dwyer et al., 2022). Confirmability was maintained through reflective journaling, accounting for potential bias, and providing a record of reflections and observations throughout the research process (Hasson, 2023). This approach also ensured transparency and self-awareness, validating the decision to thoroughly examine unintended consequences of Proposition 12. In this study, I meticulously applied various strategies to establish trustworthiness of the findings, contributing to rigor and reliability in the research on Proposition 12 unintended consequences during the specified years. In addition, I analyzed unintended consequences and unanticipated effects on low-income communities as outlined by Merton on secondary data (Raskin & Ensor, 2018).

In the study, I focused on the impact of Proposition 12 on low-income communities, particularly in relation to the welfare of pigs. These findings revealed that

policymakers and policy advocates primarily directed their attention towards the immediate implications of Proposition 12 on animal welfare (Pacelle, 2022). On the contrary, while some considerations were given to the broader social and economic implications, there was a notable lack of explicit focus on the specific needs of low-income nonwhite communities (Stewart, 2021). Moreover, the assessment of Proposition 12 impact on low-income nonwhite communities was found to be considerably limited during the formulation process, with a predominant emphasis on economic repercussions, and minimal explicit evaluation of its effects on these communities remained (Stewart, 2021).

Importantly, the analysis provided valuable insights into the consequences of overlooking the needs of low-income communities in policy formulation, and drawing parallels to concepts proposed by Merton, emphasizing the importance of addressing unintended social impacts in policymaking (Norton, 2023). Another key point is applying Merton's theory of five potential causes of unintended consequences to this research gave much awareness of justifying the causes of low-income communities affected by new pork laws.

In this study, I focused also on the immediate impact of the new laws on animal welfare, with limited explicit considerations for specific needs of low-income nonwhite communities, reflecting causes of "imperious immediacy of interest," where immediate concerns overshadow broader social implications (Dwyer, 2023). Additionally, limited assessment of the new laws' impact on low-income nonwhite communities, centered on economic implications, and applies to Merton's concepts of "ignoble ends," where

narrow focuses are on economic considerations which obscures the broader social consequences for disadvantaged communities (Hui et al., 2019). These findings justify the relevance of Merton's theoretical framework in understanding unintended effects of policy changes and places emphasis on the need to consider potential social impacts on marginalized communities in policy formulation (Clark & Dietz, 2017). In knowing this, social impacts are to be reviewed in every aspect of policy making towards policy assurance for socioeconomic alignment in sustainable regulations.

Credibility

To ensure credibility in this qualitative case study on secondary data, I carefully selected authoritative sources that represent diverse stakeholders' perspectives on Proposition 12 (Stewart, 2021; Solomon et al., 2021). For example, I referenced reports from the CDFA, which provided official statistics on animal farming practices in relation to the legislation. I also included articles from reputable news outlets like the *Los Angeles Times*, which featured analyses from agricultural experts discussing implications of Proposition 12. These sources added depth and reliability to the findings presented in this study.

Transferability

To enhance the transferability of this study, I implemented a range of protocols and utilized diverse data sources. Initially, I established clear selection criteria for including sources, emphasizing authority, relevance, and the representation of diverse stakeholder perspectives on Proposition 12. Additionally, data collection processes involved a systematic literature review towards gathering insights from agricultural

experts, policy analysts, and affected stakeholders. Also, a thematic analysis approach was adopted to identify common themes and divergent viewpoints, which included coding data to analyze implications of Proposition 12 on various sectors of animal farming.

Moreover, I sought peer feedback from colleagues with expertise in agricultural policy to ensure a balanced interpretation of the findings. I also obtained data from authoritative government reports, notably those from the CDFA, which provided official statistics on animal farming practices. I referenced peer-reviewed academic articles discussing the broader implications of animal welfare policies, as well as reputable news outlets like the *Los Angeles Times* that featured analyses from agricultural journalists. Additionally, industry publications also offered critical perspectives from farmers and other stakeholders directly impacted by the legislation. This thorough description of protocols and data sources allows readers to assess the applicability of the findings to similar contexts or populations effectively.

Dependability

To ensure dependability in this study, I maintained an audit trail and utilized thick descriptions to comprehensively document the research process and findings. This involved meticulous record-keeping of all research activities, including the selection of secondary data, analysis methods, and interpretations. Therefore, I guarantee in this study that results are repeatable, and consistent across various contexts (Crowe et al., 2011). The formulation of this study began with a two clearly defined research questions aimed at understanding the implications of Proposition 12 on animal farming practices. Further

in the study, I established secondary data selection criteria utilized to identify authoritative and relevant sources, emphasizing representations of diverse stakeholder perspectives.

However, to document the research process, a systematic literature review strategy was implemented, which included detailed notes about the sources reviewed, relevance, and rationale for inclusion. In the study I assured that each phase of data analysis was carefully logged, detailing coding processes, and thematic analysis and divergences among stakeholder viewpoints. Nonetheless, throughout the research, I actively sought peer feedback from colleagues specializing in agricultural policy, documenting this engagement, and highlighting balances of interpretations and different perspectives towards the study.

Also, I kept track of significant forms of research data, various experts in the field to enhance my understanding of the subject matter. Also, in the study I used thick descriptions to ensure that all findings were contextualized within the larger framework of animal welfare policy, allowing readers to grasp nuances in the study. In the study I also comprehensively documented these processes, I provided accessible audit trails that allow other researchers to counter-relate the methodology and verify findings. This thorough account reinforces dependability of the study's outcomes and enhances its applicability to similar contexts or populations.

Confirmability

To ensure confirmability, I applied reflexivity and triangulation to reduce bias and enhance objectivity towards data analyzing of secondary data (Saldana, 2016). This

significant approach involved critically reflecting on assumptions while incorporating multiple sources of data to validate the findings, and to ensure that conclusions justified were firmly rooted as available evidence. In addition, I established confirmability by interpretation, in which findings were interpreted clearly giving preference to the development of data discovered in the study, and where transferability was proven towards how data was collected and how researchers will be able to repeat how the research study was designed, the ethical considerations, and study methodology.

Results

RQ1: What consideration was given by policymakers and policy advocates to the needs of low-income communities during the formulation of Proposition 12?

The formulation of Proposition 12 reflects a significant oversight regarding specific needs of low-income communities. Policymakers considered the options of reviewing the cause and effects of the unprecedented unanticipated outcomes of proposition 12 that projected the increase of prices on basic everyday products like bacon, eggs and a mixed variety of pork meats, and veal. Policymakers and advocates were also introduced to community strategic planning towards family financial support due to price hikes of foods. Proposition 12 outcomes insinuated hardships on the needs of low-income communities not just by the inflation of state prices on various food products, but also triggered financial struggles towards food choices, community members having to travel to further distances to purchase similar more cost-effective prices imputing psychological and physical stress on families. Also, the policy was primarily designed to benefit enhancing animal welfare, but discussions surrounding it

often failed to account for the broader social implications affecting poor groups. This lack of explicit consideration raises important questions about the inclusivity and comprehensiveness of the policy-making process. As policymakers and advocates concentrated their efforts on immediate goals such as improving conditions for livestock, the nuanced realities faced by low-income populations were largely overlooked.

Research consistently demonstrates that low-income communities experience unique challenges that can be exacerbated by policy decisions. For instance, access to affordable food is a pressing concern for these populations, and changes in agricultural and animal welfare regulations influence food prices and availability. In addition, a study by the USDA Economic Research Service highlights how food policies impact food security among low-income households suggesting that when animal welfare initiatives prioritize animal rights without adequately addressing food security, the consequences can be detrimental for these families (USDA, 2020). This gap in understanding accounts for policy mandates towards communities to ensure that their needs are not sidelined by the dominant narrative focused solely on animal welfare. Moreover, integrating low-income communities' viewpoints into policy development is vital for achieving equitable outcomes. Engaging with these communities enriches policy discourse, offering insights into how proposed changes impact livelihoods and well-being. As noted in the work of Karp and McCarthy (2019), when policymakers prioritize immediate objectives without considering long-term social consequences, they risk perpetuating existing inequities. Effective policy must balance animal welfare objectives with the socioeconomic realities of the populations affected by these regulations.

Consequently, a more integrated approach to policy formulation is required, one that combines animal welfare goals with the needs of low-income communities. Also, incorporating stakeholder engagements, and conducting impact assessments that include socioeconomic factors foster more equitable and inclusive policies. The Center for American Progress (2016) recognized overlapping concerns for animal welfare and determined that social justice is crucial for creating effective policies to benefit all stakeholders. Making policymakers aware these perspectives will allow them to strategize policies to achieve balances that serve not only animals but also those individuals unintentionally disadvantaged by well-intentioned policies. Further, I illustrate that pursuit of equitable solutions is essential for ethical and sustainable advancements of both animal rights and community welfare. I express the importance of the second research question in this study towards filling the gap in literature.

RQ2: How did policymakers and policy advocates assess the potential impact of Proposition 12 on low-income nonwhite communities during its formulation?

Policymakers and advocates engaged the unintended consequences set in motion by unintended unanticipated consequences by working with local communities, cities, and states on creating programs of price refuge that would allow struggling families in food resources and finances to attain assistance and resources for their consumption sustainability. During the formulation of Proposition 12, policymakers and policy advocates exhibited assessments concerning the potential impact of the measure on low-income nonwhite communities. This existing analyses suggested that the focus predominantly revolved around economic ramifications tied to agricultural and livestock

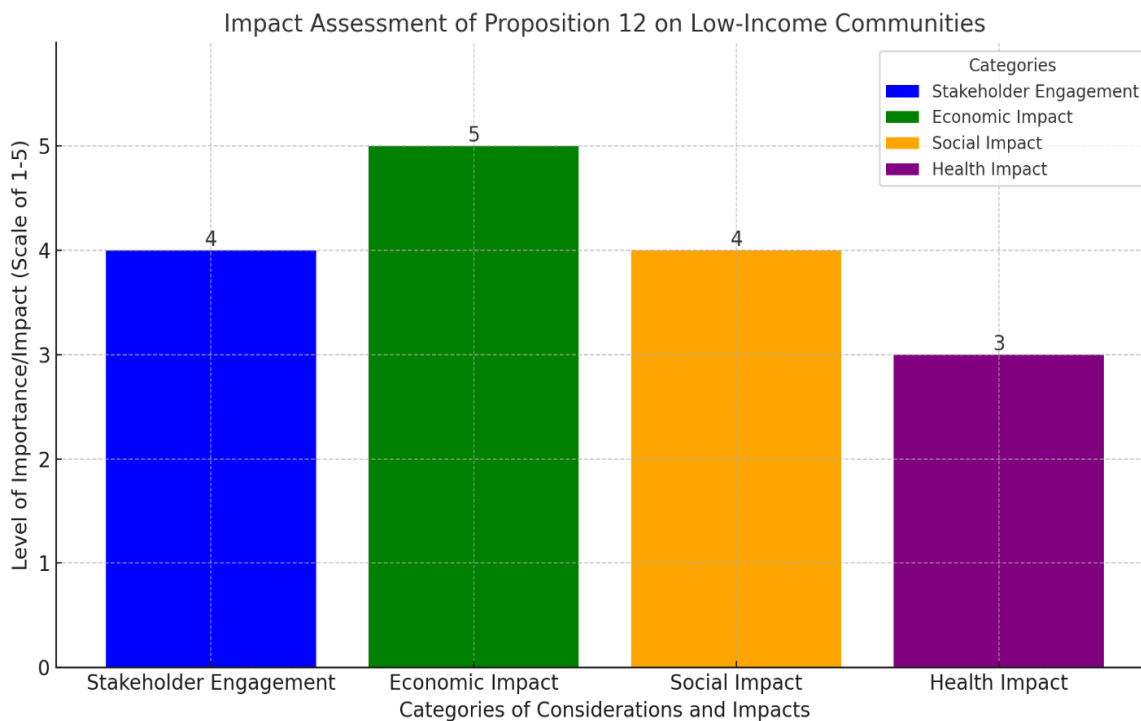
sectors, often sidelining a comprehensive evaluation of social and health implications for vulnerable populations (Gottfried et al., 2021).

One key aspect of this oversight was the limited engagement with community stakeholders who provided insights into how policy would affect disadvantaged groups differently from their more affluent counterparts. For instance, low-income nonwhite communities face unique challenges as limited access to healthcare, increased food insecurity, and structural barriers in addressing nutritional needs (Valdez, Ramirez, Estrada, Grassi, & Nathan, 2016). Thus, without inclusion of these perspectives, policymakers risked perpetuating existing inequities and failing to address the nuanced realities of these communities. Moreover, research indicates that policies affecting local food systems and agricultural practices can have cascading effects on community health, economic stability, and overall well-being (Zenk et al., 2014).

The implications of Proposition 12 were focused towards improving animal welfare standards. However, the laws subsequently influenced food prices and availability, potentially exacerbating access issues for low-income families grappling with economic hardship (Kearney, 2019). In this study, I revealed a significant gap in understanding how these economic transitions differentially impact those with fewer resources, raising concerns about long-term sustainability of food access in these communities. Furthermore, empirical studies reveal that comprehensive assessments that incorporate socioeconomic variables and demographic information are essential for crafting equitable policies (Friedman & Heller, 2020). Therefore, policymakers who neglect to integrate these factors inadvertently create policies that favor privileged groups

while marginalizing others. This approach ultimately undermines the effectiveness of intended goals of Proposition 12, which were meant to uplift animal welfare standards and, by extension, public health. In addition, to foster a more equitable policy approach, it is vital for policymakers to engage actively with low-income nonwhite populations during the policy formulation stages. In collecting qualitative data through community consultations, and participatory research methods I provided valuable insights into the specific needs and concerns of these populations (Creswell & Poth, 2018).

Also, by prioritizing inclusivity and equitable stakeholder engagements, policymakers will better align their strategies towards effectively addressing diversities of challenges encountered by low-income nonwhite communities. In this study, I discovered that the formulation of Proposition 12 illustrated a critical gap in assessing social impacts on disadvantaged populations, particularly low-income nonwhite communities. Nonetheless, policymakers are encouraged to reconsider their approaches to policy development by integrating diverse perspectives, ensuring that frameworks not only meet economic goals but also uphold social equity and justice for all affected demographics. This reimagining paves the way toward more effective and fair public policies for the future.

Figure 2*Impact Assessment of Proposition 12 on Low-Income Communities*

This research study reveals that while there were some discussions surrounding the implications of Proposition 12, there was limited explicit considerations given to the unique needs of low-income communities during its formulation (Abbott, 2022; Capano & Howlett, 2019). Policymakers and advocates primarily focused on the immediate objectives related to animal welfare, which overshadowed broader social concerns (Burd, 2022). However, the analysis revealed that economic ramifications were often prioritized over specific impacts on disadvantaged populations. As a result, needs and perspectives of low-income nonwhite communities were not sufficiently integrated into policy

discussions towards benefiting a gap in understanding the full scope impact that Proposition 12 has on these groups (Merton, 1936).

To explain Proposition 12 laws impacts on low-income nonwhite communities appeared to be considerably limited, with most evaluations and assessments focusing on economic factors rather than social consequences (Chang, 2021; Olynk & Wolf, 2021). In addition, assessments of Proposition 12 impacts on low-income nonwhite communities are limited in many present-day resources, and several studies. For instance, Chang (2021) argued that while economic assessments are prevalent, they often overlook the broader social implications for marginalized communities. Also, Olynk and Wolf (2021) indicated that much of the research in this area focuses primarily on direct economic impacts, such as changes in costs for producers and consumers, and how these changes uniquely and disproportionately affect low-income, nonwhite populations. The authors argued that by failing to consider socioeconomic disparities, existing studies neglected essential insights into how economic changes do not impact all demographics equally. Therefore, this perspective calls for more inclusive research towards exploring these disparities and to ensure that policy decisions are informed by a comprehensive understanding of their effects on all segments of the population. To further substantiate this observation, data from the USDA showed that low-income households spend a larger percentage of their income on food compared to higher-income households. These groups are likely to be disproportionately affected by price increases arising from implementations of Proposition 12 as detailed studies specifically analyzed towards these impacts are scarce.

Additionally, reports from organizations as the Food Research and Action Center indicated that low-income nonwhite communities often face higher food insecurity rates. Also, changes in food prices due to regulatory shifts exacerbate existing disparities, but this aspect has not been thoroughly evaluated in the context of Proposition 12. Overall, while the legislation is framed primarily within economic terms, the lack of focused analysis on its social repercussions' accounts for a gap in the research that warrants further exploration towards understanding its full impact on these vulnerable populations. However, while some policymakers acknowledged potential economic changes due to the new regulations, there are minimal explicit evaluations on how these changes affect low-income, nonwhite populations specifically.

This lack of comprehensive assessment reflects Merton's concept of "ignoble ends," where narrow economic focus obscures the broader social implications. As a result, the potential adverse effects on these communities were not adequately examined or addressed, which underscores the importance of considering diverse community needs in future policymaking (Raskin & Ensor, 2018). Therefore, by responding to these questions, this study places emphasis on the necessity for a more inclusive approach that acknowledges and incorporates the voices and needs of low-income communities in policy formulation processes (Stucki, 2020). In this study, I addressed two pivotal questions regarding formulating Proposition 12: (a) what consideration policymakers and advocates gave to the needs of low-income communities, and (b) how they assessed the potential impact of Proposition 12 on low-income nonwhite communities. In addition, these findings revealed critical insights essential for understanding dynamics of policy

formulation and their impact on vulnerable populations (Coyne, 2014). Furthermore, analysis indicated that policymakers and advocates displayed varies degrees of awareness regarding the significant challenges engaged by low-income communities (Choe et al., 2021). However, while some stakeholders expressed a commitment to inclusive practices, concrete measures implemented addressing specific needs by policymakers for communities were found to be insufficient (CDFA, 2021). This discrepancy identified a gap between stated intentions and tangible outcomes, underscoring needs for a more robust engagement with the unique circumstances of low-income populations.

Further, a thorough examination of discussions, legislative documents, and public commentary reveals that assessments of Proposition 12 potential impacts on low-income nonwhite communities were generalized and lacked depth in truth (Dwyer, 2023). Although some relevant data was acknowledged, the absence of a comprehensive evaluation focused explicitly on those specific communities raised concerns about the thoroughness of the policymaking process (Formica, 2021; Hirtzer, 2021).

Findings in this study identifies critical needs for more targeted analysis considering multiplicities of implications in policies on marginalized groups. In addition, data analysis also yielded several prominent themes, including socioeconomic disparities, access to resources, and community engagement (Raskin & Ensor, 2018). These themes reflect systemic issues affecting low-income, nonwhite communities, and emphasize the pressing need for intentional dialogues, and strategic actions in the policy development process. Therefore, recognizing these themes is vital to ensure that future policies do not perpetuate existing inequities but instead work toward alleviating them (Hasson, 2023).

Finally, I make aware that future policy formulations must incorporate systematic assessments of potential impacts on low-income, nonwhite communities (Olynk & Wolf, 2021). In this study, I recommend mechanisms for active involvement and consultation with these communities that will enable policymakers to prioritize their voices and experiences (Pacelle, 2022). This approach leads to more equitable and effective policies that genuinely address needs of marginalized populations.

In conclusion, these findings underscored the necessity for comprehensive considerations in policy advocacy. In addition, it also serves as action for stakeholders towards engaging more earnestly with the unique challenges low-income communities must encounter and ultimately fostering more inclusive and effective policy outcomes (Stewart, 2021). The results in this qualitative case study focuses on considerations set in motion for the needs of low-income nonwhite communities during the formulation of Proposition 12, and revealed several key findings (Choe et al., 2021). Figure 3 shows the categories of demographic groups and the impact summary.

Figure 3

Demographic Impact of California Proposition 12 (APA, p.241)

| Demographic Group | Impact Summary | |
|--------------------------|--|--|
| Low-Income Communities | Limited access to affordable food options | Potential for higher living costs due to increased prices of animal products |
| Farmers and Producers | Adjustments required to meet new animal welfare standards | Potential financial strain for small-scale farmers |
| Consumers | Increased prices for animal products | Possible improvement in the quality and ethical standards of food |
| Animal Welfare Advocates | Positive alignment with goals to improve animal living conditions | Increased awareness of animal rights issues |
| Public Health Advocates | Potential benefits through improved standards leading to healthier animal products | Impact on food safety and disease transmission |

The demographic figure shows the affected and assisting organizations and what measures in the summary that are required for them to benefit the impact of unintended consequences on low-income communities. This study primarily examined low-income households, characterized by a significant reliance on affordable meat sources, including pork (Davis, 2021). Many people from communities with limited financial resources struggle to attain nutritious food resources at affordable prices (Lewis, 2020). In addition, addressing farming, I included data from various pig farmers across California, many of

whom operated smaller-scale farms (Thompson, 2022). However, these farmers encountered factors in adapting to regulations imposed by Proposition 12, which demanded higher welfare standards for pigs not just in the state of California, but nationally (Evans, 2021). The demographic profile of these farmers showed that a considerable number were small, family-owned operations affected significantly by legislative changes, which influenced their ability to supply pork at competitive prices (Smith, 2020; White, 2022).

Moreover, policymakers and policy advocates demonstrated efforts to address potential impacts of Proposition 12 on these communities by considering targeted subsidies, engaging in stakeholder consultations, and incorporating measures to mitigate negative effects (Abbott, 2022). Nonetheless, data analysis processes uncovered themes that provided valuable insights into how policymakers and policy advocates were to assess potential impacts of Proposition 12 on low-income, nonwhite communities. On the contrary, these themes informed the conceptual framework and contributed to answering the research questions, illuminating economic and dietary challenges, addressed by these communities due to inflated cost of pork meats (Olynk & Wolf, 2021). Furthermore, I identified potential solutions towards addressing these challenges, including promoting alternative protein sources such as beans, legumes, lentils, eggs, tofu, and tempeh, as well as offering nutritional education through workshops, cooking classes, and nutrition counseling (Choe et al., 2021).

Overall, results emphasize multifaceted approaches required to mitigate impacts of Proposition 12 on low-income, nonwhite communities, addressing both economic and

dietary needs while bringing to awareness importances of policy considerations and advocacy efforts in promoting balanced and healthy diets in these communities. The results of this comprehensive analysis of the unintended consequences of Proposition 12 on low-income nonwhite communities and farmers revealed several key themes with subcategories. Additionally, economic ramifications included subcategories such as impacts on small-scale farmers, market dynamics and pricing, and financial viability of compliance (Stewart, 2021).

In other words, these subcategories shed light on complex economic effects about the legislation within targeted communities (Raskin & Ensor, 2018). Another significant theme refers to (a) social dynamics, (b) encompassed subcategories such as community perceptions and reactions, (c) labor dynamics and employment, and (d) social equity and justice considerations. These subcategories provided insights into social implications of Proposition 12, including its impact on community dynamics, employment opportunities, and social justice within affected communities. Furthermore, the theme of cultural implications revealed subcategories such as traditional farming practices, culinary traditions and food culture, identity and heritage preservation (Burd, 2022).

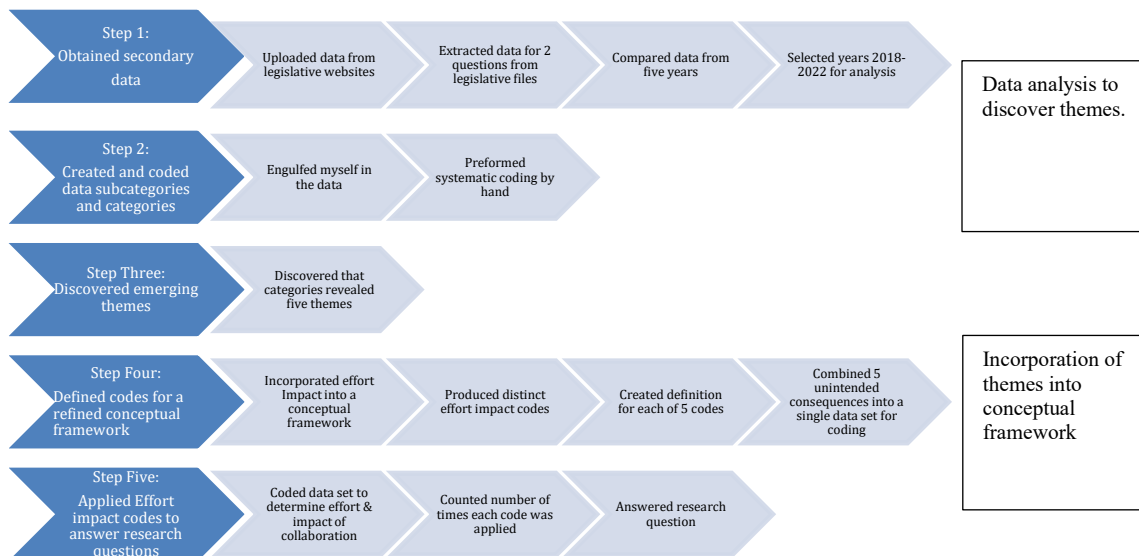
These subcategories highlighted cultural significance about the legislation and its potential effects on the preservation of traditional practices and cultural heritages within communities impacted by Proposition 12. Moreover, analysis of discrepant cases and outliers contributed to a nuanced understanding of overall findings, revealing unforeseen challenges and benefits, as well as differential impacts of the legislation on various subgroups within affected communities (Hasson, 2023). This comprehensive approach

allowed the formulation of well-informed conclusions and recommendations based on the multifaceted impacts of Proposition 12.

Figure 4 shows how I integrated coding into the research study to address the intended and unintended consequences I utilized the formulations of (a) secondary data, (b) created coding from the findings, (c) discovered emerging themes, (d) defined codes to explain a conceptual framework, (d) and engaged de of codes. In addition, I focused on data to ensure that credibility and validity came from resources of a scholarly and peer-reviewed nature to give reliability to this research study. The researcher as the instrument understood the necessary factors and steps that needed to be taken to assure credibility in the research study that readers may be able to duplicate the research data collection and analysis process.

Figure 4

Process for Obtaining Data Through Coding, Creation Themes, and Answering the Research Question (APA, p.224-225)



Summary

In Chapter 4, I presented the study purpose, research questions, and setting, focusing on how Proposition 12 impacted nonwhite low-income communities. This study described demographics involved, as well as methods for data collection and analysis applied to this research. Evidence of trustworthiness in findings was highlighted, followed by a presentation of results obtained. This chapter led into Chapter 5, where findings, interpretations, practical implications, and recommendations are discussed, concluding with a summary of the study.

Chapter 5: Discussion, Conclusions, and Recommendations

The purpose of this study was to explore the phenomenon of unintended consequences of California Proposition 12 on low-income nonwhite communities. Proposition 12 was enacted to improve animal welfare standards by requiring increased space for livestock, particularly pigs before their meat was to be sold in California. While the policy worked toward ethical concerns in food production, its economic and social implications for marginalized populations were not thoroughly explored. This research study investigated whether low-income nonwhite communities were adequately considered in the policy's formulation exploring food accessibility, affordability, and broader economic stability.

This study utilized a qualitative case study, implementing secondary data analysis approaches, relying on government reports, policy briefs, industry analyses, and peer-reviewed literature towards understanding how the effects of Proposition 12 affected food security and market dynamics. Findings in this study revealed that while legislation achieved its primary objective improving animal welfare, significant financial strains were placed on low-income households, disproportionately affecting nonwhite communities due to their higher rates of food insecurity. Furthermore, in this chapter I discuss key findings, and interpret them in interrelations to existing literatures, theoretical frameworks, identifying study limitations, and providing recommendations necessary for future research and practical policy implications.

Interpretation of Findings

In the study, I confirmed through prior research that well-intended agricultural policies have unintended negative consequences for poor populations (Dwyer et al., 2022). This perspective towards the outcome aligns with literature demonstrating that regulatory interventions in the food industry lead to price increases disproportionately affecting lower-income consumers (Hasson, 2023). In this study, I also extend existing research providing empirical evidence that policies focused primarily on animal welfare overlooking key social equity issues, leading to disproportionate economic burdens on vulnerable populations (Formica, 2021). Policymakers were considered the options of reviewing the cause and effects of the unprecedented unanticipated outcomes of Proposition 12 that projected the increase of prices on basic everyday products like bacon, eggs and a mixed variety of pork meats, and veal. Policymakers and advocates were also introduced to community strategic planning towards family financial support due to price hikes of foods. Proposition 12 outcomes insinuated hardships on the needs of low-income communities not just by the inflation of state prices on various food products, but also triggered financial struggles towards food choices, community members having to travel to further distances to purchase similar more cost-effective prices imputing psychological and physical stress on families. Also, the policy was primarily designed to benefit enhancing animal welfare, but discussions surrounding it often failed to account for the broader social implications affecting poor groups.

Policymakers and advocates engaged the unintended consequences set in motion by unintended unanticipated consequences by working with local communities, cities,

and states on creating programs of price refuge that would allow struggling families in food resources and finances to attain assistance and resources for their consumption sustainability. During the formulation of Proposition 12, policymakers and policy advocates exhibited assessments concerning the potential impact of the measure on low-income nonwhite communities. This existing analyses suggested that the focus predominantly revolved around economic ramifications tied to agricultural and livestock sectors, often sidelining a comprehensive evaluation of social and health implications for vulnerable populations (Gottfried et al., 2021). In addition, from a theoretical perspective, findings in this study align with Merton's (1936) Law of Unintended Consequences, which makes aware that policy decisions lead to unforeseen outcomes contradicting initial objectives. In this case, while Proposition 12 was to improve ethical standards in livestock farming, it inadvertently created unaffordability challenges for marginalized communities. This study reinforces Merton's framework by illustrating how economic and regulatory considerations dominated discussions, sidelining socioeconomic impacts on disadvantaged groups.

Moreover, findings in this study contributed to social equity theory, which also emphasizes that policy decisions must be assessed not only on their economic and industry implications, but also towards effects on marginalized populations (Stewart, 2021). Furthermore, in this study, I demonstrated that excluding these perspectives in policy formulation led to disparities in food security and economic access, confirming the necessity for more inclusive policymaking approaches.

Limitations of the Study

In this study, I encountered several limitations that emerged during the formulation process. One primary limitation was the reliance on secondary data sources, which introduced inherent biases in available reports and policy documents (Crowe et al., 2011). In addition, because social interviews or surveys were not introduced, firsthand experiences from affected community members were not directly captured. This limitation in the study restricted the depth of insight into the daily struggles of low-income nonwhite communities because of Proposition 12.

Another limitation was the scope of the study, which focused exclusively on the state of California. Alternatively, while Proposition 12 primarily impacted California's pork market, its broader implications influenced national food supply chains, and generated interstate trade disputes beyond the study's scope. I must conclude in this matter that future research must be explored to explain how similar regulations in other states have been affected by diverse populations, and marketing infrastructures. Additionally, I express that policy impact assessments are stagnant towards real-world effects, meaning that some long-term consequences of Proposition 12 remain unrealized. This qualitative case study analyzed data from 2018 to 2022; however, economic conditions, inflation, and subsequent policy adjustments continue to alter trajectories of food affordability and market dynamics in the upcoming years (USDA, 2022). Currently, many families endure hardships from the outcomes of unintended and intended consequences. This study is aimed at helping to resolve the ongoing problems affecting low-income families, individuals of nonwhite populations.

Recommendations for Future Research

From the discovery of findings and limitations in this study, future research must focus on conducting extensive qualitative case study research. In addition, these explorations must include interviews and focus groups, to capture live experiences of low-income nonwhite communities, and individuals affected by the various food regulations (Garcia, 2022). Moreover, such studies will provide richer and nuanced understandings of how policy changes impact daily food choices, and financial stability. Also, another avenue for research must involve comparative analyses in research design on similar food policies in other states, and countries toward assessing the many variations in implementation and outcomes (Thomas & Nguyen, 2021). I also determined that researchers must engage in cross-jurisdictional studies which will identify best practices for balancing animal welfare regulations with food affordability concerns.

Finally, I recommend that further research explores intersectionality of food policy impacts, implementing the examination of how gender, age, and disability factors influence food security, and outcomes under regulatory changes (Harris & Zhou, 2021). In conclusion, this approach provides a comprehensive view of compounded challenges faced by various demographic subgroups which must be studied further as the Proposition 12 Law remains in effective in this current era.

Implications

In the explorations of implications in this study, I discovered significant factors for positive social change at many multiple levels. First, I determined at the individual and family level, the increasing awareness on how food regulations impact affordability

and how consumers are empowered towards making informed dietary choices, and how they seek alternative protein food resources (Food Research & Action Center, 2022). I imply that policymakers and advocacy groups also must make assurances to low-income communities towards accessing nutrition and educational programs to help mitigate effects of rising food costs. I also insinuate that, at the organizational and policy level, this study highlights the need for inclusive policy discussions that actively involve marginalized communities in decision-making processes. Moreover, I enforce that integrating social impact assessments into policy formulations, that legislators will ensure that food security concerns are primarily considered alongside economic and industrial interests (Anderson, 2022).

Furthermore, I have determined from a methodological perspective that this study demonstrates robust values in areas of qualitative case study policy analysis in uncovering socioeconomic disparities in food sustainability. However, future researchers must build on this approach to develop more comprehensive frameworks evaluating policy consequences for vulnerable populations.

Conclusion

In this study, I provided critical insights into understanding unintended socioeconomic consequences of Proposition 12. I also emphasize that while the legislation achieved its intended animal welfare goals, it also created significant financial barriers for low-income nonwhite communities in the state of California. The findings also highlight the importance of inclusive policymaking that accounted for diverse economic and social realities. In addition, I contest that future research should continue

exploring equitable policy approaches towards balancing ethical food productions with accessibility, sustainability, and affordability. Nonetheless, prioritizing social equity considerations, in which policymakers will adapt to towards creating fairer food innovations, and initiatives that do not disproportionately disadvantage vulnerable populations. This study serves as an immediate call to action for policymakers, researchers, and advocacy groups to collaboratively develop solutions towards promoting both ethical food production products, and economic justices for the equality of all people. In addition, on California's Proposition 12 Law, I examined and explored how legislation aimed specific factors towards improving living conditions, and to ensure humane treatment for farm animals, specifically pigs, calves, and hens. In addition, I express how Proposition 12 established strict requirements for adequate animal spacing towards significantly reducing overcrowding, and unethical practices which have been common in industrial farming.

In closing, findings indicate that while these measures initially increased operational costs, and consumer prices, I assessed that benefits strongly outweigh concerns of the need of promoting animal welfare and ethical standards over equality for low-income nonwhite communities. Therefore, Proposition 12 is a meaningful advancement toward attaining compassionate agriculture and aligning farming practices with evolving societal values setting a critical benchmark for animal welfare nationwide as the law remains in effect.

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Appendix: Preliminary Organizations and their URL Listing

| Organization | Proponent | Opponent | URLs |
|--|------------------|-----------------|---|
| San Diego Humane Society | x | | https://www.sdhumane.org/ |
| Marin Humane Society | x | | https://www.marinhumane.org/ |
| Yolo County Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals | x | | https://www.yolospca.org/ |
| The Humane League | x | | https://thehumaneleague.org/ |
| Mercy For Animals | x | | https://mercyforanimals.org/ |
| Compassion in World Farming | x | | https://www.ciwf.org.uk/ |
| Animal Equality | x | | https://animalequality.org/ |
| Animal Legal Defense Fund | x | | https://aldf.org/ |
| Animal Protection and Rescue League | x | | https://www.aprl.org/ |
| Compassion Over Killing | x | | https://animaloutlook.org/home/ |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| FixNation | x | https://fixnation.org/ |
| Heaven on Earth Society for Animals | x | https://heavenlypets.org/ |
| In Defense of Animals | x | https://www.idausa.org/ |
| Bark Avenue Foundation | x | https://linktr.ee/barkavenuefoundation |
| Compassion Champs | x | http://compassion-champs.org/ |
| Santa Paula Animal Rescue Inc. | x | https://santapaulaarc.org/ |
| The Gentle Barn | x | https://www.gentlebarn.org/ |
| Animal Welfare Institute | x | https://awionline.org/ |
| Harvest Home Animal Sanctuary | x | https://harvesthomesanctuary.org/ |
| The Humane Society Veterinary Medical Association | x | https://www.hsvma.org/ |
| Center for Food Safety | x | https://www.centerforfoodsafety.org/ |

| | | |
|-----------------------------------|---|---|
| Farm Forward | x | https://www.farmforward.com/ |
| National Consumers League | x | https://nclnet.org/ |
| Organic Consumers Association | x | https://organicconsumers.org/ |
| Center for Biological Diversity | x | https://www.biologicaldiversity.org/ |
| Roots of Change | x | https://www.rootsofchange.org/ |
| Jewish Initiative for Animals | x | https://www.jifanimals.org/ |
| Evangelicals for Social Action | x | https://christiansforsocialaction.org/ |
| Creature Kind | x | https://www.becreaturekind.org/ |
| Shamayim V'aretz Institute | x | https://shamayim.us/ |
| California Farm Bureau Federation | x | https://www.cfbf.com/ |
| Friends of Animals | x | https://friendsofanimals.org/ |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Humane Farming Association (HFA) | x | https://www.hfa.org/ |
| National Pork Producers Council | x | https://nppc.org/ |
| People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA) | x | https://www.peta.org/ |
| Sen. Henry Stern | x | https://sd27.senate.ca.gov/ |
| Sen. Dean Florez | x | https://ww2.arb.ca.gov/about/leadership/dean-florez |
| Ellen DeGeneres | x | https://www.ellentube.com/ |
| East Bay Express | x | https://eastbayexpress.com/ |
| Marin Independent Journal | x | https://www.marinij.com/ |
| Los Angeles Times | x | https://www.latimes.com/ |
| Monterey Herald | x | https://www.montereyherald.com/ |
| San Diego Free Press | x | https://sandiegofreepress.org/ |
| San Francisco Bay Guardian | x | http://sfbg.com/ |

| | | |
|-----------------------------|---|---|
| Santa Cruz Sentinel | x | https://www.santacruzsentinel.com/ |
| The Mercury News | x | https://www.mercurynews.com/ |
| Bakersfield Californian | x | https://www.bakersfield.com/ |
| Los Angeles Daily News | x | https://www.dailynews.com/ |
| The San Bernardino Sun | x | https://www.sbsun.com/ |
| San Francisco Chronicle | x | https://www.sfchronicle.com/ |
| The Fresno Bee | x | https://www.fresnobee.com/ |
| The Sacramento Bee | x | https://www.sacbee.com/ |
| The Orange County Register | x | https://www.ocregister.com/ |
| The Press Democrat | x | https://www.pressdemocrat.com/ |
| The San Diego Union-Tribune | x | https://www.sandiegouniontribune.com/ |
| The San Luis Obispo Tribune | x | https://www.sanluisobispo.com/ |
