Tempered Actions in the Face of Tempered Resistance: Practitioners' Role in Change in Support of Undocumented Students in California Community Colleges

by

Esmeralda A. Hernandez-Hamed

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Doctoral Committee:

Professor Michael N. Bastedo, Chair
Professor Silvia Pedraza
Associate Professor Rosemary Perez
Associate Professor Awilda Rodriguez, University of Maryland College Park

Esmeralda A. Hernandez-Hamed

esmerahe@umich.edu

ORCID iD: 0009-0006-1032-940X

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Dedication

I dedicate this dissertation to my mom, Ana, my partner, Ibrahim, and my daughter, Ayana, with whom I am so lucky to experience unconditional support and love.

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Abstract

This study aimed to understand why and how community college practitioners act for institutional change in support of undocumented students—drawing on concepts from the tempered radicals framework. I used qualitative inquiry and exploratory interviews to understand how community college practitioners make meaning of the changes they have been involved in or have observed on campus for undocumented students. I conducted interviews with 27 participants across 16 community college institutions who were involved in supporting undocumented students. The interviews explored the nature and timeline of institutional support, how and why the practitioners began supporting undocumented students, perceptions of institutional culture, the process by which support for undocumented students was adopted and institutionalized, and the role of practitioners and allies in that change. The findings illustrate how tempered radicals were motivated to act when their social, personal, and professional identities highlighted a misalignment between their and the institution's equity values. When practitioners had the opportunity to act in support of undocumented students, it was usually on their own or within organizational norms, contributing to continuous and fragmented change. However, episodic events also provided windows of opportunity or could present significant challenges for change. This dissertation suggests seven major components of the context for action that can show adverse or favorable contexts for change in support of undocumented students; two notable components are discourses around "serving all students" and who was deemed responsible for serving undocumented students. Adverse contexts for change were

reproduced by tempered resistance, inconspicuous actions that practitioners took (or did not take) that effectively resulted in sustaining the status quo inequitable practices for undocumented students. Ultimately, this study adds to the literature on how organizational norms of community colleges can shape individual practitioner's actions, which, in exchange, provide opportunities and constraints for future change for undocumented students.

Chapter 1 Undocumented Students, Institutional Change, and Practitioners

The 20th century provides a plethora of examples of individuals facilitating social justice change on college campuses; students, faculty, and other leaders within higher education have mobilized around topics such as affirmative action (Rhoades, Saenz, & Carducci, 2005), anti-sweatshop movement (Barnhardt, 2015), ethnic studies (Rojas, 2005) and other multicultural initiatives related to race, gender, and sexual orientation (Rhoades, 1998). Efforts to bring about social justice change on campuses were traditionally focused on those at the top of the organization—college presidents, vice presidents, and college boards (Bensimon & Neuman, 1990; Kezar, 2007; Kezar, Carducci, & Contreras-McGavin, 2006). When scholars focused on outside authority structures for leadership, it was usually reported and studied from students' perspective—the leaders of the most visible movements on university campuses. Within the student campus activism literature, scholars identify higher education practitioners as having one of two roles: responders to campus activism (Rhoads, 1998) or allies to student groups (Chen & Rhoads, 2016; Rojas, 2007). Although a few scholars have, in the last 15 years, expanded definitions of leadership within higher education to include a broader range of higher education practitioners (e.g., professional staff and faculty) (Kezar & Lester, 2011), there is still much to learn about how practitioners in higher education act, particularly around issues of social justice and the processes that facilitate and constrain their efforts for change.

Colleges and universities have experienced and continue to undergo a period of intense change within the past decade. Among those changes is serving an increasingly diverse group of students who have been historically oppressed and disadvantaged in the United States. However,

many would argue that higher education institutions have not made the organizational changes necessary to keep up with the changing needs of their student body (Kezar, 2014). Colleges and universities are not retaining and graduating students of color or those from low-income backgrounds compared to White students. For example, the 4-year graduation rates at public universities of Black (18.6%) and Latinx (24.8%) students are well below the national average (34.4%) (NCES, 2015). Open-access institutions like community colleges were meant to help close the gap by eliminating the access barrier for historically underrepresented populations. However, these student groups continue to experience gaps in outcomes even at the community college level. In California, community colleges have reported a 41.6% 5-year completion rate for Latinx students compared to 53.9% for White students for the 2011-2012 cohort (CCCCO Data Mart, 2017). These data suggest persistent barriers for minoritized students once they matriculate into colleges and universities.

1.1 Social Justice and Higher Education

The history of exclusion and criminalization of undocumented students warrants situating their case within the social justice umbrella. The role of higher education in social justice has been an ongoing scholarly and public discussion. On the one hand, higher education is considered the key to social and economic mobility in the United States, leading to the perception of higher education as a social equalizer (Altbach, 1991). The post-WWII era brought with it a massive expansion of higher education. Junior colleges (or community colleges) expanded access to those who would not have been able to afford higher education or did not have the educational background to access selective institutions. Even selective institutions would see impressive growth in the number of racially minoritized students after affirmative action policies of the 1960s went into effect.

However, scholars argue that higher education also serves to perpetuate inequities in society, reproducing privileged cultural classes (Bourdieu, 1973) and fueled by racism (Harper, 2012), sexism, xenophobia, and other forms of oppression. These scholars argue that the foundational values of the institution replicate a majority white middle-and-upper class student body. For example, the value of meritocracy in higher education has led to a system of testing, ranking, and sorting in admissions that has systematically disadvantaged minoritized students (Bastedo & Jaquette, 2010; Cortez, 2010; Guinier, 2015). These admissions policies inform the idea of meritocracy in higher education that excludes and discriminates against low-income students of color and affects all students, even those at open-access institutions who were not subject to admissions policies (Dowd, 2007). The processes that produce this inequity were part of the founding of higher education and continue to be a part of the normal and legitimate structures, policies, and practices of today's campuses (Gonzales, 2007, 2009; Hebel, 2010; Rhoads & Szelényi, 2011).

Community colleges play a special role in the system of higher education. The general public perceives community colleges as a point of access for all those who want to continue their education beyond high school. They serve a population that is more diverse along several identities such as race, socioeconomic status, and age and, therefore, are serving a higher proportion of the minoritized populations in the U.S. Yet, the reality of community colleges in the U.S. and California do not always align with the idea of serving minoritized populations *well*. Research suggests that institutional logics, like academic capitalism, can make leaders across institutions of higher education make decisions that are counter to equity and social justice efforts that would prioritize the experience of minoritized students like the undocumented community (Kezar & Lester, 2011; Ross, 2009).

These competing characterizations of higher education as both a social equalizer and an oppressor illustrate the tension in higher education between reproducing and maintaining the status quo and fulfilling its social values. This tension is illustrated in the case of undocumented students, for example, between those who posit that undocumented students are taking the place of citizens—insinuating that citizens should be prioritized or are more deserving of education—and those who say that higher education institutions must educate undocumented students who are part of the fabric of U.S. society, and have the right to an equitable education. Furthermore, deep seeded ideological discourses in higher education, such as assuming universalist ideas of serving "all students" without significant attention to the particular needs of minority populations, are also obstacles to institutions becoming attuned to the equity needs of minoritized populations (Bensimon, 2016; Ching, 2013; McNair et al., 2020). In cases–like that of undocumented students–where institutional practices do not yet align with the full inclusion of minoritized groups, it is often practitioners employed at these institutions who are the first to act on behalf of students who approach them with institutional barriers.

1.2 Practitioners and Change in Higher Education

The role of practitioners in change, particularly around social justice issues, is still an area of growth in higher education. One of the reasons for this is that practitioners are highly accountable to the college or university given—for example—that they are paid employees and have a deep understanding of the cultural norms of higher education (Arthur, 2008). Given this insider status, many models, frameworks, and theories of change assume that practitioners create change through normalized decision-making practices and that change occurs top-down. The shared governance structure of higher education places much of the change decisions and implementation with college presidents and governing boards (Eckel & Kezar, 2016). Within

that same structure, faculty are given formal leadership and decision-making abilities through bodies such as the academic senate, particularly in the areas related to the academic mission of the institution (e.g., learning, pedagogy, and research). Thus, literature on faculty mobilization and change leadership centers around curriculum and other areas within their agency (see Rojas, 2005 for an example). Most student affairs professionals, however, do not fit neatly into the governing structure of higher education. Thus, it is difficult to find research on professional staff and mid-level administrators; they are left out of the literature on change on campus because their roles in formal change processes of higher education institutions are not clearly defined.

1.3 Practitioners as Leaders, Institutional Agents, and Allies Against the Status Quo

Because higher education practitioners work in a loosely coupled system of parts, they can choose to act on conflicting values and beliefs of the university (Birnbaum, 1988). When practitioners have personal or professional values or beliefs that differ from the institution's practices, this provides some opportunity—within the constraints of organizational norms and practices—to take action to change the policies and practices of that organization (Kezar & Lester, 2011). Therefore, when senior leadership on campus does not visibly and adequately address the needs of particular minoritized student populations, it is often other practitioners at the front lines of supporting these students, sometimes in ways that are outside of formal institutional norms.

Thus, higher education practitioners—including administrators, faculty, managers, supervisors, student affairs, academic, and counseling professionals—all play a crucial role in understanding the changing needs of the contemporary student body. The nature of practitioners' campus roles allows them to adapt their practices to serve those changing needs (Bensimon & Malcom, 2012). Stanton-Salazar (2011) suggests that practitioners should be *institutional agents*

providing resources, knowledge of the system, advising, advocacy, and networking. Being an institutional agent is particularly important for those higher education practitioners–like student affairs professionals and faculty– who interact one-on-one with students (Gildersleeve & Ranero, 2010). Faculty have important roles in mentoring, advising, and developing student success (Baker & Griffin, 2010). These one-on-one interactions that higher education practitioners have with students are how faculty and staff make a difference, even within limited contexts. However, less is known about practitioners' roles in changing their institutional practices for student populations marginalized by higher education. As in the case of undocumented students, the role of practitioners in change is still unclear.

1.4 A Brief History of Undocumented Students and Higher Education

1.4.1 Undocumented Students and Postsecondary Education Law

Undocumented students experience a precarious legal status in the United States because they fall under both immigration policies and educational laws that are often in conflict (Gildersleeve & Hernandez, 2012). While education is primarily a state issue, immigration policy is the federal government's responsibility. Furthermore, Americans hold values of meritocracy and educational opportunity but also believe in notions of punishment for “illegal” status. In this fashion, policy regarding undocumented students happens at the nexus of federal, state, and organizational systems and is at the center of fierce discussion (Gildersleeve & Hernandez, 2012). The history of undocumented student- and postsecondary access- policy shows the unresolved nature of this debate.

Plyler v. Doe. Plyler v. Doe (1982) was a groundbreaking decision that established the constitutional obligation to provide K-12 education for undocumented students and gave them legal access to that area of society. Nevertheless, the decision also had important limitations.

First, the decision stopped short of explicitly giving undocumented students access to postsecondary education. Second, Plyler v. Doe did not provide a path to citizenship for these students (Olivas, 2012). In this way, the Plyler decision was instrumental in setting a context for both the inclusion and the exclusion of undocumented youth in the U.S. (Gonzales, Heredia, & Negrón-Gonzales, 2014).

The Plyler case ascended to the U.S. Supreme Court after 1975 when the Texas Education Code (TEC) was changed to require the denial of admission to students who could not provide proof of legal citizenship in the public K-12 school system. The change also included withholding state reimbursements for undocumented students, requiring them to pay tuition for their K-12 education. Several cases were brought against Tyler Independent School District (TISD) because the district required tuition for admission of undocumented students. Undocumented students who could not enroll in K-12 education because of their undocumented status brought the lawsuits.

Plyler v. Doe is an important decision for various reasons. While Justice Powell did not conclude that education is a fundamental right, he did note that there is no compelling reason to deny education to one group while allowing others the opportunity. The decision also stated that "illegal entry into the country would not, under traditional criteria, bar a person from domicile in the state" (*Plyler v. Doe*, 1982). The findings from Plyler stressed that a person in the U.S., regardless of citizenship status, has some constitutional protection (Olivas, 2012). Therefore, while parents of undocumented students were integrated into low-wage labor markets, their children were integrated into schools where they were inculcated with ideas of meritocracy and the democratic process. In this way, although this decision provided only a limited legally legitimate space for these students, it simultaneously allowed change (Gonzales et al., 2014).

Policymakers and other interested parties continue to evoke the spirit of the Plyler decision in many discussions over undocumented student policy.

Leticia "A" v. Board of Regents of the University of California. State and federal law and the courts also clashed over whether undocumented students were residents of their respective states and could pay in-state tuition. A lawsuit brought forth by undocumented students in California called Leticia "A" v. Board of Regents of the University of California (1985) led the California Superior Court to rule that undocumented students were bona fide California residents and were subject to the equal protection clause. Undocumented students were again allowed to pay in-state resident tuition for six years. However, the Leticia "A" case was repealed in Bradford v. the Board of Regents of the University of California (1990), and undocumented students enrolling in postsecondary institutions starting in 1991 would pay out-of-state fees in California, as in the rest of the country, until the passage of AB 540 in 2001.

Illegal Immigration Reform and Immigrant Responsibility Act. The Illegal Immigration Reform and Immigrant Responsibility Act (IIRIRA) was passed in 1996 and was one of the harshest immigration legislations of the twentieth century. This federal legislation severely limited access to public benefits by expanding the categories of "criminal aliens" subject to mandatory detention and deportation without the possibility of bond and eliminating judicial review of detention and bond decisions of undocumented people. IIRIRA also sought to limit access to higher education. Section 505 of IIRIRA prohibited undocumented student eligibility for in-state resident tuition based on residency unless a U.S. citizen or national is eligible for that benefit. Scholars posit that policies like IIRIRA were the result of steadily growing racial anxiety and xenophobia in the U.S. (Aranda & Vaquera, 2015; Cobb, 2021).

Some states would eventually use their power over domicile to provide in-state resident tuition despite IIRIRA.

The Proposed Development, Relief, and Education for Alien Minors Act (DREAM Act). The Development, Relief, and Education for Alien Minors Act (DREAM Act) was a proposed federal legislation that sought to provide a pathway to citizenship for undocumented students for certain qualified undocumented migrants who migrated as children. It first failed to pass in Congress in 2001, and different versions of the bill failed in 2007 and 2010. As a response to the failure of Congress to pass the DREAM Act and despite IIRIRA, 16 states passed state DREAM Acts, which did not give a path to citizenship but did provide in-state tuition and state financial aid.

California's AB 540. In 2001, California passed its version of a state DREAM Act, AB 540, which made undocumented students eligible for in-state tuition and gave them access to state financial aid as long as they met the following criteria: attended a California high school for three or more years, had a high school diploma or equivalent, enrollment at an accredited institution in California, and filing an affidavit confirming intention to apply for legal residency as soon as possible (Abrego, 2008). This law relieved undocumented students of the financial barriers to attending and succeeding in higher education in California.

Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals. President Obama introduced the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals program (DACA) in 2012. DACA temporarily eliminated the risk of deportation for eligible undocumented youth and offered temporary social security numbers and job permits. To be eligible, the applicant had to be under age 31, attend or have graduated high school, reside in the U.S. continuously since 2007, be without felony and—some—misdemeanor convictions, and not pose a threat to national security or public safety. Although it

still did not provide a path to citizenship, DACA provided the "potential to improve the incorporation and mobility trajectories for eligible youth" (Gonzales, Terriquez, & Ruszczyk, 2014, p. 1853) ensuring that undocumented immigrants would be protected for two years. However, DACA was a temporary relief for which recipients needed to reapply every two years, and that would need to be renewed by the president every two years, given that it was not a law passed by Congress.

With the election of Donald J. Trump to the presidency in 2016, the fate of DACAmented individuals became uncertain. On September 5, 2017, the Trump administration rescinded DACA, which said it would phase out the order by allowing only those who already had an approved DACA authorization to reapply before March 2018. However, judicial injunctions forced the program to continue to accept DACA renewals beyond the March deadline. DACA continues to be disputed in the courts and public politics today. This lack of clarity is a source of great unease for DACAmented students and their families who rely on the program to work on- and off-campus or to access college programs like study abroad or who were already abroad. The stop to DACA may also concern practitioners who may have relied on the program to provide legitimacy for proposed institutional changes for undocumented students.

These court and policy decisions have shaped barriers and opportunities for undocumented students throughout society. It is within these policy contexts that undocumented students experience inequities that are both unique and similar to those of other minoritized populations.

1.4.2 Data on the Undocumented Student Population

Given their liminal legal status, there are few reliable and comprehensive datasets on the undocumented student population. Policies like AB540 (2001) and DACA (2012) have provided

additional data access. Some of what we know about undocumented students is through the data on undocumented immigrants and families broadly. A 2020 report by the New American Economy and President's Alliance on Higher Education and Immigration posited that there are approximately 454,000 undocumented students in higher education–making up approximately three percent of the total student population. Data from the Pew Research Center in 2008 gives an idea of the educational attainment of the undocumented population in the U.S. (PEW, 2019).

Undocumented individuals in the U.S. share many minoritized identities, such as being low-income, first-generation college students, and racially minoritized. Seventy-five percent of undocumented adults (ages 25-64) have not attended college, which makes it likely that unauthorized children who pursue postsecondary education are first-generation college students. Undocumented immigrants and their children make up 11% of the nation's total population in poverty, which is twice their representation of the total population (5.5%) (PEW, 2019). Low levels of education and only having access to low-skilled labor reproduce patterns of poverty because undocumented immigrants have lower incomes than documented immigrants or U.S.-born citizens. Finally, unauthorized immigrants also hold racially-minoritized identities. In 2008, 81% of undocumented immigrants had origins in Latin America, while another 11% came from South and East Asia (Passel, & Cohen, 2009). These overlapping identities mean that undocumented students are likely to encounter barriers to and within higher education based on these multiple minoritized identities.

DACA has made it easier to track a portion of the undocumented student population through the education pipeline. The Migration Policy Institute is tracking the data on DACAmented individuals by state. They estimate that 20% (39,580) of the 197,900 recipients of DACA are enrolled in a postsecondary institution in California (Migration Policy Institute,

2018). Although the percentage of DACAmented adults (age 15-32) that are enrolled in postsecondary education reflects that of the overall population of the same age (18% vs. 20%), only 4% complete postsecondary education compared to 18% of the general population of the same age (The Migration Institute, 2018). Given that only 51% of those who qualify for DACA have participated in the program, the latest data does not reflect the undocumented students in higher education without DACA, who face more legal and financial barriers than their DACAmented peers. An end to new applications for DACA status in 2007 and ongoing litigation[1] ensures that new cohorts of students entering higher education are doing so without DACAmented status.

1.4.3 Barriers to Undocumented Student Success in Higher Education

The barriers to undocumented student success in higher education occur at many levels and at the junction of multiple identities and legal statuses. Researchers have pointed to multiple challenges for undocumented students at the student, campus, and national and state policy levels (Suárez-Orozco et al., 2015). At the student level, many undocumented students work while at school to pay for their studies and contribute to family income (Pascarella, Pierson, Wolniak, & Terenzini, 2004; Perez, 2010; Suárez-Orozco et al., 2015; Terriquez & Gurantz, 2014). However, for undocumented students, it is difficult to work without authorization. DACAmented students may be the only ones in their families with legal authorization to work (Gurrola, Ayón, & Moya, 2013). These are financial and time barriers that are specific to this population; many undocumented students also live with the fear that they or their families will be separated and deported (Contreras, 2009; Garcia & Tierney, 2011; Perez, 2009; Perry, 2006).

[1] The U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services website contains a summary record of four DACA related litigation decisions including December 4, 2020, July 16, 2021, October 14, 2022, and September 13, 2023 extending DACA renewals and prohibiting processing new applications.

Undocumented students also experience barriers at the campus level. The cost of college has been a major factor in undocumented students' access and persistence. Evidence shows that in-state resident tuition policies have increased the access and persistence of undocumented students (Flores & Horn, 2009; Flores, 2010; Huber & Malagon, 2007; Terriquez, 2015). However, funding college is still a problem for undocumented students, even at community colleges, due to the minimal work opportunities and the need to contribute financially to their households (Terriquez, 2015).

Another barrier for undocumented students is limited campus resources and institutional agents (Hallet, 2015; Suárez-Orozco et al., 2015). Once on campus, it is difficult for undocumented students to find trusted practitioners with whom to disclose their immigration status and to find peers and allies that may increase their sense of belonging on campus (Hallet, 2015). Research has highlighted the gaps in the knowledge about undocumented students for many practitioners in higher education, particularly when it comes to understanding the application and financial aid processes specific to that population (Macías, 2018; Muñoz & Vigil, 2018). In their 2021 study on institutional agents and their support or exclusion of undocumented Latina/o college students, Luedke and Corral noted that institutional agents were "unapologetically uneducated" (Luedke & Corral, 2021, p. 582). They asserted that institutional agents "may rely on ignorance of undocumented student circumstances to avoid supporting them" (Luedke & Corral, 2021, p. 582).

In addition to a lack of resources specific to the undocumented population, these students have limited access to opportunities that are readily available to their peers, such as work-study and study abroad (Sanchez & So, 2015). Although DACAmented students had access to these

resources for a time, it is unclear whether they should take advantage of studying abroad in the current political climate for fear of being unable to return to the U.S. (Mangan, 2016).

Given that undocumented students also tend to be racially minoritized, they can also struggle with negative campus racial climates. College campuses have struggled with negative racial climates for students of color (Hurtado & Carter, 1997; Solorzano, Ceja, & Yosso, 2000). Given the high proportion of undocumented students from Latin America and South and East Asia, we know that undocumented students share the negative racial climates of these groups. Undocumented students can experience negative racial climates in the form of microaggressions and discrimination for both their legal status and for being members of their respective racial groups (Suárez-Orozco et al., 2015). These barriers can lead to anxiety and depression for undocumented and DACAmented students (Pérez, Cortés, Ramos, & Coronado, 2010; Teranishi, Suárez-Orozco, & Suárez-Orozco, 2015), and lead to lower rates of retention (Hallet, 2013), persistence (Flores & Horn, 2009), and success for undocumented and DACAmented students academically (Teriquez, 2015).

California Community College Context. In California, undocumented students are more likely to attend community colleges than any other public college or university system (Teranishi, Suarez, Orosco, 2011). The California Master Plan cemented the community college as the system to support massification and universal access to higher education (Kerr, Gade, & Kawaoka, 1994). What resulted was a system of higher education institutions that were much more affordable and accessible, given their placement in communities with high proportions of minoritized racial/ethnic and immigrant groups and their non-selective application process. Thus, community colleges hold a large share of undocumented students across California's three major public institutions (University of California, California State University, and Community

College). Out of the 74,000 undocumented students enrolled in one of those three systems, about 60,000 are believed to be enrolled at one of the 114 California community colleges (Barshay, 2017).

1.5 Undocumented Student Support in Higher Education

The equity gaps in outcomes for undocumented students, like all minoritized students, is an ongoing challenge for higher education (Valenzuela et al., 2015). Before DACA, most institutions of higher education and the practitioners who worked there were unaware of undocumented students on campus or in the community. They had little knowledge about undocumented students' challenges and how to support their access and success. Research on undocumented students increased as immigration became a major public debate, especially after organized protests by immigrants and immigrant advocates in 2006. As researchers began to build a substantial body of research on undocumented students, it became clear that many students received misinformation from higher education practitioners (Abrego & Gonzales, 2010). Undocumented students who received accurate information happened to know a practitioner who was knowledgeable about their situation or was willing to learn.

As policies concerning undocumented students in higher education arose, and researchers and practitioners learned more about undocumented students' challenges to and within higher education, there was more discussion of what institutions could do. Following the research, Valenzuela and colleagues (2015) outlined steps that institutions needed to take to gain what they coined "institutional undocu-competence (IUC)." Elements of IUC included 1) written institutional policy that supports undocumented students and ongoing assessment of undocumented student needs; 2) training for college faculty and staff about the unique challenges hindering undocumented student success; 3) visible and open advocacy so that undocumented

students can easily identify practitioners they can trust; 4) college outreach and recruitment; 5) proactively connecting undocumented students to financial aid options; 6) institutional support for undocumented student-organizations that are often at the forefront of supporting undocumented peers; 7) providing health and psychological services for undocumented students with the understanding that their legal statuses cause additional stress, alienation, and depression; 8) creating a welcoming campus environment where undocumented students are able to access resources to develop personally, academically, and professionally in a way that validates and increases a sense of belonging for undocumented students.

Despite these guidelines, support for undocumented students on campus varies widely. For many campuses, support still takes the form of informal networks and small clusters of practitioners that hold most of the knowledge about undocumented students. Other campuses are pushing for visible, formal, and physical support for undocumented students at the campus level.

1.5.1 Undocumented Student Resource Centers (USRCs)

Physical spaces where undocumented students can receive services and support on campus, generically called Undocumented Student Resource Centers (USRCs), have become one model for undocumented student support in California colleges. The first USRC in the United States is believed to have started on the University of California Berkeley campus in 2012 and was called the Undocumented Student Program (USP). The USP sought to “provide a personal, holistic, multi-identity, and solution-focused service model” (Canedo-Sanchez & So, 2015, p. 467). This model included having two full-time staff members who communicated directly with undocumented students from admission to graduation. It also included counselors trained to talk to students who experienced personal, family, and institutional challenges because of undocumented statuses. The USP also lent books, had an emergency loan program, and provided

workshops specific to undocumented students, such as financial aid strategies and study abroad opportunities (Canedo-Sanchez & So, 2015). At Berkeley, the staff at USP also created and facilitated the UndocuAlly Training Program, which is meant to train and inform faculty, staff, and administrators at other institutions about undocumented student issues.

The type of institutionalization that happened at Berkeley did not spread easily throughout the nation or even California because institutionalizing support, policies, and practices for undocumented students was a difficult process–even for Berkeley. The article reported that the USP team received many calls from practitioners at other institutions who were interested in starting a USP on their campus.

After two vetos by Governor Brown, California passed AB 1645 under Governor Newsom in 2019 that would require community colleges to have a liaison specializing in providing support for undocumented students, and strongly recommended colleges open USRCs (also called DREAM resource centers (DRC) in California) on campus. The legislation left the definition of DRCs relatively general, noting that DRCs "may offer support services, including, but not limited to, state and institutional financial aid assistance, academic counseling, referral services, and legal services." The goal of DRCs would be to "seek to empower and create a safe and welcoming environment for [AB 540] students" (Assembly Bill No. 2009 § 66021.8, 2016) Finally, the legislation suggested that campuses could house DRCs in existing student service or academic centers. As of 2018, only about 35 of the 114 community colleges had DRCs with dedicated staff; another 16 have a DRC space but do not have a dedicated staff member for undocumented students (CCCDP, 2018).

A study by Cisneros and Valdivia (2020) interviewed practitioners at 49 USRCs across the U.S. They found that undocumented student activism usually led to adopting a USRC. They

also highlighted practitioners' intentional inclusion of student voices in naming USRCs and the politics involved in determining the USRC's structure and staffing. Whether a USRC was standalone or merged with other centers, there were challenges with resources, staffing, and concerns about undocumented student safety.

1.5.2 UndocuAlly Training

Undocumented students have voiced the importance of educating practitioners to be better allies (Richards & Bohorquez, 2015; Suarez-Orozco et al., 2015) Once Berkely established their UndocuAlly training, they became a popular offering on university and college campuses nationwide. Many were based on Berkeley's original model because the facilitators there were eager to provide the tools to other campuses (see Crewalk, 2021). There are currently no comprehensive views of UndocuAlly program content and quality.

A few studies have looked at some aspects of UndocuAlly training. One study of an UndocuAlly program in Arizona called DREAM Zone found that practitioners who took this training improved their competency in awareness, knowledge about laws and policies, connecting with undocumented students, and the skills and practices for working with undocumented students. The participants in the DREAM Zone training also improved their self-efficacy about undocumented students, meaning they felt more capable of improving their experiences on campus (Cisneros & Cadenas, 2017). A follow-up longitudinal study on the same training found that the positive outcomes remained for the training's participants, whether it was two or eight months after the training (Cisneros & Lopez, 2020). In her dissertation, Crewalk (2020) identified the UndocuAlly training at VU as a counter-space for undocumented student trainers to access resources and engage in transformative resistance in the absence of a USRC.

1.5.3 Alternative Supports

On a spectrum of offering the least to the most services, it is generally believed that campuses with a USRC offer more holistic services. However, no one has yet recorded each USRC provides, and they likely do not offer the same things. At the bottom of the spectrum of institutionalized support are colleges that provide a website for undocumented students indicating where they can go for resources inside and outside of the institution but have no particular space or program available. The Dreamer's Project indicated that about 75% of California Community Colleges had some information on their college website for undocumented students. However, these webpages' accuracy, timeliness, and depth varied significantly (CCCDP, 2018). Many colleges fall somewhere in the middle of the spectrum. Some colleges have explicit services but no physical space, usually meaning the services are managed by the undocumented student liaison or an undocumented student organization on campus. Some undocumented student services are given physical space and staff at the institution, but the space is shared with centers for other student groups, such as LGBTQ centers.

It is important to note that the purpose of this dissertation is not to argue that every community college in California should have a DREAM Center. Rather, this dissertation explores higher education practitioners' actions to support undocumented students in any capacity and whether/how they lead to particular forms of institutionalized support systems for undocumented students.

1.6 Practitioners and Undocumented Students

There is a small but growing body of literature that focuses on practitioners in the context of undocumented student issues. The largest body explores how practitioners support undocumented students, usually one-on-one (Bahn & Radovic-Fanta, 2021; Gildersleeve & Ranero, 2010; Ngo & Hinojosa, 2021; Peña, 2021; Perez, 2010) or fail to support undocumented

students (Castrellón, 2021). However, there is less understanding of how practitioners change institutional practices that would support undocumented students beyond one-on-one interactions.

Other studies explore changes practitioners have implemented to support undocumented students on their campuses. For example, studies have examined the impact of training on UndocuAllys (Cisneros & Cadenas, 2017; Valenzuela, et al., 2015), the impact on, and practitioners' implementation of policies (Martinez-Hoy & Nguyen, 2019; Nienhusser, 2018); and institutionalizing support services (Cisneros, Valdivia, Reyna Rivarola, & Russel, 2022; Gildersleeve & Vigil, 2015; Southern, 2016). One study looked at the specific role of presidents in supporting undocumented students at the institutional level (Freeman, Varelas & Castillo, 2021). Some key takeaways in these practitioner-focused studies were the role of student activism in catalyzing change, as well as the importance of institutional mission and data for making the case for institutional changes (Cisneros & Valdivia, 2022; Cisneros et al., 2022; Southern, 2016). Task forces and advisory groups provided increased capacity for supporting undocumented students (Cisneros & Valdivia, 2022; Southern, 2016). These studies still emphasized the type of support practitioners implemented rather than their role in implementation; however, in interviewing practitioners, these studies have begun to highlight important factors for those who are institutionalizing change for undocumented students.

Chen and Rhoads (2016) conducted one of the few empirical studies documenting the actions of practitioner allies in support of undocumented students. They found that institutional allies engaged in "organizational activities, including fundraising, letter writing, public speaking, organizing and facilitating workshops, developing training programs, and engaging in collegial exchanges" to support undocumented students on campus (Chen & Rhoads, 2016, p. 536). They

called the actions of these faculty and staff an act of transformative resistance, mainly because they encountered significant resistance from their colleagues and the community outside their institution if they spoke openly about the needs of the undocumented population. This study has laid the foundation for understanding how practitioners in higher education act for undocumented students.

1.7 Research Questions

This study seeks to answer the following research question: Why and how do community college practitioners act individually and collectively to create institutional change supporting undocumented students?

1. What motivates community college practitioners to want to take action in support of undocumented students?
2. How do practitioners take action for undocumented student support in community colleges?
3. What do practitioners perceive are the opportunities and constraints for action supporting undocumented students at community colleges?

By answering these research questions, I hope to contribute to scholarship on whether and how practitioners act toward larger institutional changes in practice or policy for undocumented students and how the opportunities and constraints of their institution led them to act in the ways they did. With this scholarship, I hope to improve practitioners, undocumented students, and other allies' ability to identify the constraints to change and find new opportunities for action supporting undocumented students. The ultimate goal is for community colleges to effectively adapt their practices, policies, and structures to support the equity for undocumented students.

1.8 Summary of Chapter One

In sum, the prior literature on social justice change in higher education has focused on the (1) role of students as activists, (2) faculty as change agents in curricular matters, or (3) administrative leadership as responders to student activism or agenda setters. As more minoritized students, such as undocumented students, access higher education, there is a need to change practices, policies, and structures to ensure that these students experience equitable success. Given the history of traditional governance structures in higher education and loosely coupled systems on campus, not all higher education practitioners—such as student affairs professionals and staff—are included in the literature on institutional change for minoritized groups in general and undocumented students in particular. Scholarship on campus allies, institutional agents, and tempered radicals within higher education suggest that many practitioners at different levels of the institution can act in ways that support undocumented students. However, there is little research that shows how practitioners act to institutionalize change for undocumented students and the opportunities and challenges of enacting such change.

Chapter 2 Theoretical Framework

To guide this study on the role of practitioners in change, I use concepts from two theoretical areas: social movements and organization management. Social movement theory and concepts have had some traction in higher education literature concerning student movements but have not been used as commonly to look at the role of practitioners in change. The tempered radicals framework stems from the literature on social movements and helps understand how practitioners act when the positions within organizations bind them. Kezar & Lester (2011), applied the tempered radicals theory to their study of grassroots leadership for social justice change in different higher education institutions. They provide additional scaffolding for the tempered radicals framework in higher education.

2.1 Tempered Radicals

The tempered radicals framework helps understand the relationship between an individual's identity, action, and change within an organizational context where the practices and values of an organization are contrary to the values of some individuals within that organization. Tempered radicals are “individuals who identify with and are committed to their organizations, and are also committed to a cause, community, or ideology, that is fundamentally different from and possibly at odds with the dominant culture of their organization” (Meyerson & Scully, 1995, p. 586). This ambivalence or duality means that tempered radicals work within organizations but remain at the margins in some ways. Tempered radicals can be both critics and advocates of the status quo and radical change as long as they do not endanger their positions within the

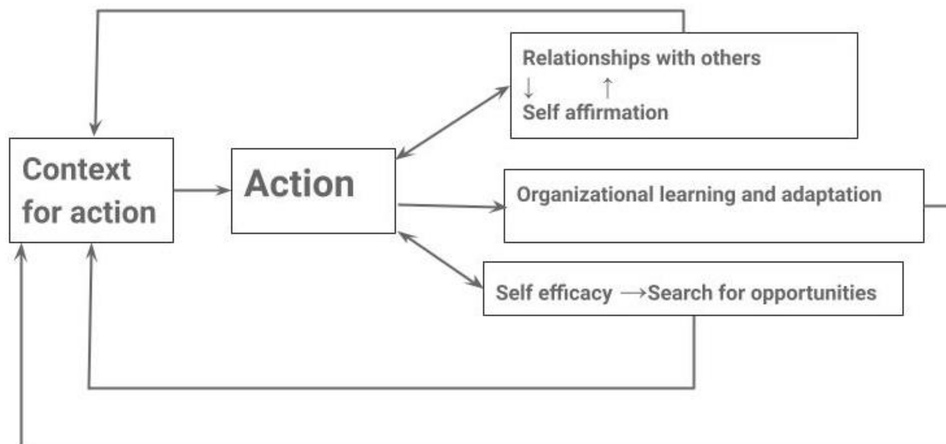
organization. Given their marginal status, tempered radicals rely on subtle change-oriented strategies, including small wins and long-term strategies (Meyerson & Scully, 1995, p. 594). However, literature suggests there are times when tempered radicals will engage in strategic collective action to enact more significant and shorter-term change (Meyerson, 2001; Quinn & Meyerson, 2008).

Meyerson created *The Action Cycle: How Action Transforms Self and Others* (Figure 1) within the tempered radicals framework, which models the connection between the self and action and change in an organization. This process rests on particular assumptions about change and the individual identities that Meyerson calls the "self." Meyerson (2013) assumes that change is continuous and fragmented, making it difficult to pinpoint when change occurred. This type of change contrasts with periodic, episodic, or revolutionary change. In other words, change is not caused by "specific trigger events, such as crises, technological innovation, top-down strategic mandates, or bottom-up revolutions" (Meyerson, 2003, p. 12). Those within the organization may notice the change only after some time has accumulated enough actions to make the change visible. Thus, the model of action does not end with the change but is cyclical and iterative, allowing for the accumulation of actions that reflect organizational learning and adaptation from the mundane to the revolutionary. Thus, the first proposition of this dissertation is as follows:

Proposition 1: Participants will discuss change in ways that are continuous and fragmented, meaning they are the result of the accumulation of tempered actions and not the result of episodic events.

Figure 1

The Action Cycle: How Action Transforms Self and Others (Adapted from Meyerson, 2003)



Meyerson also has assumptions about individuals' identities. The tempered radicals framework assumes individuals, or "who we are—our "selves"—is at the same time stable and mutable" (Meyerson, 2003, p. 13). In other words, an individual's identities are relatively fixed. However, individuals can change how they present particular identities according to external cues. Individuals can change, hide, or display their mutable identities (professional, family, religion) more prominently depending on the cues they receive from different contexts. For example, a female faculty member who is Black is likely to have a very salient black identity in a majority white department whether or not that identity is salient to them personally. That same faculty member may or may not be interacted with as a woman, depending on the context. The context could also suppress an identity if it does not conform. Meyerson (2003) provides the example of a person criticized for performing their religious identity in their organization and is therefore disinclined to make their faith explicit in that context.

The self is formed in relationships with others through how they affirm or do not affirm particular identities. Thus, an individual's relationships within an organization may lead to different performances of identity that conform to the organization's dominant culture and norms. This organizational identity may differ from those fostered outside the organization, where relationships with others might reflect different values, beliefs, and practices. It can feel threatened if "the self" that an individual most values does not conform to the organization's dominant culture. It is essential to have other individuals affirm the threatened valued self either within or outside of the organization for individuals to retain that identity. Thus, relationships with others who also hold or understand threatened identities (otherwise known as allies) within the institution will create opportunities for change. In order to lead to change, individuals must assert their threatened or nonconforming identity to present an alternative to the norm. The concept of 'the self'—or identity within tempered radicals provides an additional proposition for this dissertation:

Proposition 2: A practitioner will assert a threatened personal or professional identity to present alternative support for undocumented students.

Within the Action Cycle, the concept of an *action*—however small—can interact with the self and the organization in several ways. Meyerson provides a spectrum of actions a tempered radical can strategically draw upon for change. The spectrum (as seen in Figure 2) ranges from left to right in two dimensions. The first is scope and impact, with the actions on the left affecting fewer people while those on the right reach more people and groups. The second is the underlying intent, where the actions on the left are to preserve the individuals' true selves and values, and actions on the right are done with the intent of organizational learning and change. On the left is the action of *resisting quietly and staying true to one's "self*," which has the

smallest scope and the intent of preserving the self. On the right is *organizing collective action,* which has the largest scope and intends to change the organization.

Figure 2

How Tempered Radicals Make a Difference (Adapted from Meyerson, 2003)

An action can affirm (or disaffirm) threatened *identities*. As noted earlier, relationships with others can also affirm or disaffirm identities that fall outside the norm. This affirmation brings individuals into a community with other individuals who share an identity, which may prompt those individuals to join in on action steps or search for opportunities for action. An action is also born out of and impacts an individual's self-efficacy or the belief that one can affect change. Self-efficacy can affect change by motivating individuals to search for opportunities to make that change. Searching for opportunities increases the chances that individuals will find opportunities for change. The relationships with others, organizational learning and adaptation, and opportunities for action are all elements that affect the organizational context, making it more or less amenable to action. Propositions 3 and 4 focus on relationships with allies and actions that contribute to self-efficacy for further action.

Proposition 3: Practitioners' relationships with other practitioners they perceive as allies leads to increased self-efficacy and then to a search for opportunities for action.

Proposition 4: An action taken by one or more practitioners in support of undocumented students will lead to more opportunities for action.

2.2 Complementing the Tempered Radicals Model for Action: Symbolic and Material Representations

I borrow two concepts from institutional logics–*symbolic and material representations*– that may be important to change in support of undocumented students in community colleges. Institutional logics is a larger perspective defined most thoroughly by Thornton and Ocasio (1999). The institutional logics perspective is too comprehensive of a perspective for me to fully apply to this dissertation. However, literature on undocumented students and higher education suggests that a narrower application of symbolic and material representations can help support tempered radicals theory by operationalizing aspects of the organizations where tempered radicals are embedded (in this case, community colleges). Institutions are material and symbolic. Thus, an organization is comprised of tangible structures, practices, and artifacts that represent the materials of organizations as well as intangible meanings and ideas and cultural symbols that make up its symbolic aspects (Thornton, Ocasio, & Lounsbury, 2012). These two concepts create a picture of the norms of an organization and the institutions of which they are a part. Symbolic aspects of logics include the theories, narratives, and framing guiding and organization's actions. Theories are general guiding principles that delineate how and why practices should operate as they do. Narratives are stories that individuals and organizations use to make sense of actions and events and attribute significance to them. Frames are another aspect of symbolic representations. They are used to shape grievances, attribute problems, and motivate action. Because frames are integral to institutional logics and tempered radicals, I will expand on frames broadly and in the context of undocumented issues.

The tempered radicals framework and institutional logics perspective both reference the importance of *framing processes* in acting in tempered ways and reinforcing the belief systems that guide action within organizations. Framing processes, also known as collective action frames, focus on "cultural components, ideas, and meaning within social movements" (McAdam, McCarthy, & Zald, 1996, p. 5). At its core, a frame identifies a problem, its causes, and the solution. After seminal studies by Gitlin (1980) and Gamson, Fireman, and Rytina (1982) about the application of positive and negative frames by the media and protest groups, Snow and his colleagues (1986) solidified frames as a prominent arm of social movements literature.

Snow and Benford (1988) posited several core concepts to understand how movement leaders strategically use collective action frames to mobilize groups. They suggested there were three main framing tasks: diagnostic framing, prognostic framing, and motivational framing. Diagnostic framing, as the name suggests, is a re-interpretation of the problem and why that problem exists; prognostic framing provides a solution to the problem named; and motivational framing gives reasoning to move to collective action, given that knowing the problem and the solution may not be enough to persuade individuals to act.

Along with this strategic conception of what frames do, Gamson (1990) and colleagues have their conception of framing as a way to negotiate meaning. Under his list of basic components is the concept of *identity* by specifying a particular group with "shared interest and values," thus identifying a "we" and "them;" *agency* by suggesting that collective action can help solve the problem for that group; and *injustice*, by placing blame on the "them" to cause a response for the "we" (Gamson, 1990). These concepts complement those by Snow and colleagues. However, there are instances where collective action frames are not rooted in social justice, such as in the white nationalist movement or self-help movement (Noakes & Johnston,

2005). Gamson's conceptions are still helpful for understanding frames from the perspective of potential social movement participants. They are beneficial for this study in understanding why higher education practitioners choose to act in support of undocumented students.

Scholars have used framing processes to study students' perspectives on social movements on campus. For example, framing helped students in the 1989 Chinese Democracy Movement appeal to a broader audience by invoking reformist values and traditional Chinese cultural narratives of self-sacrifice and community devotion (Zuo & Benford, 1995). Similarly, Chilean students sought to appeal to a broad audience by framing problems with the Chilean higher education system as financial burdens on the lower and middle classes. They thought of novel ways to spread narratives (Salinas & Frasier, 2012). Benford (2007) described various diagnostic and prognostic frames surrounding the intercollegiate athletics reform movement. Other scholars have examined how community college presidents frame campus initiatives and motivate change (Eddie, 2003, 2005, 2010; Hamilton, 2016). These studies highlight the strategic thinking of higher education stakeholders as they create change in higher education. Kezar and Lester (2011) explored the role of practitioners in social justice change and how symbolic ideas of academic capitalism–such as increasing efficiency and revenues–became a core part of what is considered appropriate practices for those who wanted to create change. The higher education practitioners found appropriate practices to move their change efforts forward, such as seeking external funding, appealing to the desire for institutional prestige, or being aware of cost-cutting discourse. Practitioners took actions that aligned with the higher education field.

Although the concept of framing processes is not used widely in higher education, substantial literature looks at framing processes around immigration in the U.S. and, specifically, how people frame policy issues about undocumented individuals. Scholars posit that

undocumented immigrants have been framed broadly in two ways: “good/deserving” or “bad/undeserving.” Thus, immigrants have been framed negatively as criminals, aliens, and lazy. On the other hand, supporters of immigration reform and immigrants’ rights describe them as hardworking, law-abiding, contributing members of society (Becerra, Adroff, Ayon, & Castillo, 2012; Coutin, 2005). Various entities construct and use these frames, including politicians, the media, and activists for and against immigration and immigrant rights.

Issues particular to undocumented students—such as access to higher education and a path to citizenship—also have their particular frames. Reich and Barth (2010) wrote about framing processes in the debate to adopt in-state resident tuition (ISRT) policies in Kansas and Arkansas (two unlikely states to pass ISRT). They found that each state framed the issue differently, and may have led to different state legislative outcomes. Advocates of undocumented students in Kansas regularly framed the issue as educating Kansan children. They were on the scene of the debate early and consistently. The opposition in Kansas, on the other hand, sought to frame undocumented students as criminals and linked immigrants to terrorism post-9/11. The opposition was not as vocal and came into the debate late. Their framing was not as effective as the advocates in that state, and ISRT passed. In Arkansas, opponents framed providing in-state tuition as an issue of whether the state had the authority to enact an ISRT policy, not as a question of the deservedness of undocumented students, which authors believed played a part in why the policy failed in Arkansas.

The media also plays a role in framing undocumented student issues in ways that can influence public opinion. A study of newspaper articles in Massachusetts relating to undocumented students found that the media often focused on the American dream and legal frames (Jefferies, 2009). The American Dream Frame encompassed ideas such as undocumented

working hard, having the right attitude, and being good citizens. The legal frame, on the other hand, emphasized undocumented students as criminals—Table 1 lists six frames discussed in studies on undocumented people and students. The following proposition suggests that these frames are important to practitioners within institutions as they seek to act to institutionalize change in support of undocumented students.

Proposition 5: Practitioners will evoke frames in support of undocumented students that depicts undocumented students as "good/deserving"

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Issues particular to undocumented students—such as access to higher education and a path to citizenship—also have their particular frames. Reich and Barth (2010) wrote about framing processes in the debate to adopt in-state resident tuition (ISRT) policies in Kansas and Arkansas (two unlikely states to pass ISRT). They found that each state framed the issue differently, and may have led to different state legislative outcomes. Advocates of undocumented students in Kansas regularly framed the issue as educating Kansan children. They were on the scene of the debate early and consistently. The opposition in Kansas, on the other hand, sought to frame undocumented students as criminals and linked immigrants to terrorism post-9/11. The opposition was not as vocal and came into the debate late. Their framing was not as effective as the advocates in that state, and ISRT passed. In Arkansas, opponents framed providing in-state tuition as an issue of whether the state had the authority to enact an ISRT policy, not as a

question of the deservedness of undocumented students, which authors believed played a part in why the policy failed in Arkansas.

The media also plays a role in framing undocumented student issues in ways that can influence public opinion. A study of newspaper articles in Massachusetts relating to undocumented students found that the media often focused on the American dream and legal frames (Jefferies, 2009). The American Dream Frame encompassed ideas such as undocumented working hard, having the right attitude, and being good citizens. The legal frame, on the other hand, emphasized undocumented students as criminals—Table 1 lists six frames discussed in studies on undocumented people and students. The following proposition suggests that these frames are important to practitioners within institutions as they seek to act to institutionalize change in support of undocumented students.

Proposition 5: Practitioners will evoke frames in support of undocumented students that depict undocumented students as "good/deserving"

Table 1

Undocumented Issue Frames

Frames	Specifics of frame	Sources
Fiscal Frame	● Contributing members of society ● Contributing to fiscal instability	(Jefferies, 2009; Reich & Mendoza, 2008)
American Dream Frame	● Legality, playing by the rules ● Working hard/ best & brightest ● Having the right attitude ● Innate talents and abilities ● Good citizenry ● Good Americans ● No fault of their own	(Jefferies, 2009; Nichols, 2013; Patler & Gonzales, 2015)
Legal Frame	● Criminality ● Illegality	(Jefferies, 2009; Nichols, 2013)

	• Criminalizing parents vs children	
State Violating Federal Law Frame	• The state cannot violate federal law IIRIRA	(Reich & Barth, 2010)
Terrorism Frame	• Immigrants are violent • 'The Latino Threat'	(Chavez, 2008; Reich & Barth, 2010; Reich & Mendoza, 2008)
Public Education Issue Frame	• Everyone should have a right to education	(Reich & Barth, 2010; Reich & Mendoza, 2008)

Symbolic representations alone do not constitute a logic. Symbolic representations must also inform and be informed by the material representations of the institution. In this dissertation, *material representations* refer to the institution's structures, practices, and artifacts. These are more tangible representations of the institution. These material representations hold meaning for institutions. For example, Thornton, Ocasio, and Lounsbury define practice as "forms or constellations of socially meaningful activity that are relatively coherent and established." (2012, p. 128) Thus, it is not just a set of banal activities but activities that hold meaning. Individuals' activities, structures, and artifacts have meaning, order, and reason within an organization. Kezar and Lester discuss practitioners' strategies and tactics for social justice change. These strategies included professional development, hiring like-minded people, and working with students. These strategies comprise the material representations of higher education organizations, where professional development is already a standard and expected practice with a set of taken-for-granted activities.

Usually, these material representations fall within what is considered appropriate within the organization. Material representations that do not align with what is appropriate are considered anomalous. They may cause tension with an institution's current material and symbolic representations. For example, academic capitalism was not always a part of higher education institutions, whose practices aligned, at one time, with the separation of knowledge

creation from the commercial aspects of society. However, changing external pressures, such as the declining state appropriations for public institutions, have led to changing practices, structures, and artifacts that connect higher education to the global economy.

Social movements can be another factor leading to changes in higher education material representations. Take, for example, the social movement leaders who created ethnic studies at colleges and universities nationwide. They then had to make structural changes to their departments and artifacts, such as the curriculum and recruitment material for the institution. However, these efforts to change the material practices of the institutions were not easy and were met with decisions meant to maintain the status quo. This was the case with the creation of the Chicana/o studies at the University of Washington, where the decision to merge all ethnic studies together into a single department ultimately created practices and structures that weakened the power of any one ethnic studies program (Moreno, 2022).

Proposition 6: The context of community colleges will enable or temper practitioners' actions based on what is considered appropriate material representations and what would be considered anomalous.

2.4 Summary of Chapter Two

I hope this dissertation builds upon the literature on allies, institutional agents, and tempered radicals in higher education to understand how actions collectively lead to institutional change for undocumented students and how the institution constrains or provides opportunities for these practitioners. The tempered radicals framework and the additional organizational concepts of symbolic and material resources provide helpful frameworks to understand why and how practitioners act toward institutional change in support of undocumented students. The tempered radicals framework suggests that for practitioners who are embedded within

institutions but whose identities and values are in contrast to those of the institution, the accumulation of continuous and fragmented actions leads to larger change. The framework also suggests that relationships with allies or non/allies and the success of prior actions will be important motivations for further action.

Symbolic and material representations of an institution are complementary concepts to tempered radicals, suggesting that practitioners will be conscientious to evoke theories, narratives, and frames to make meaning of their actions or inaction in support of undocumented students. The framing of undocumented students will vary based on the action taken but will generally fall into two main frames: “good/deserving” or “bad/undeserving.” Finally, the organization's norms will quell the extent to which practitioners want to act in support of undocumented students. What is considered appropriate or inappropriate to the material representations of the institution of higher education and community college organizations is the structures, practices, and artifacts currently in place.

Chapter 3 Methods

This dissertation utilizes qualitative inquiry, primarily through exploratory interviews, to understand how higher education practitioners make meaning of the changes they were involved in on campus for undocumented students. Exploratory qualitative research involves an inductive process for collecting and understanding data, meaning that the data is not used to test hypotheses or prove the theory. However, data builds concepts and theories using rich descriptions of a particular phenomenon (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). As such, exploratory qualitative research is best when understanding an understudied phenomenon, such as how practitioners act toward institutional change supporting undocumented students.

Underlying my choice to use qualitative inquiry is a critical constructivist paradigm. Therefore, I assume that research is interpretive—in other words— "that reality is socially constructed; that is, there is no single observable reality…there are multiple realities, or interpretations, of a single event" (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016, p. 9). I also assume that individuals make meaning of their experiences in relationships with others and their contexts (Creswell & Poth, 2017). Therefore, participants decide what constitutes an action or change supporting undocumented students and how they make meaning of their identities, motivations, change, action, opportunities, and constraints in relationships with others and within the context of California community colleges.

The "critical" in critical constructivism sheds light on the how "dominant power operates to manage knowledge" (Kincheloe, 2005, p. 10). It requires critical consciousness, the "ability to

step back from the world as we are accustomed to perceiving it and to see the ways our perception is constructed via linguistic codes, cultural signs, race, class, gender and sexual ideologies, and other often-hidden modes of power" (p. 11). Critical constructivism is the perspective for this dissertation because the knowledge here is not created with the purpose of objectivity but instead to seek sources of oppression and exploitation in our higher education systems so that we can better dismantle them.

In this study, my primary source of data was one-on-one semi-structured interviews. Other data sources included memos, the participants' public community college websites, and public social media accounts related to undocumented student programs or groups on these campuses.

3.1 Participant Identification and Selection

Interview participants were selected based on any of the following criteria: a) demonstrated involvement in support of undocumented students, b) involved in current support services for undocumented students, c) involved with formal or informal decision-making groups with power to adopt or institutionalize support for undocumented students. These criteria ensured that the participants could speak to their perception of the historical and current process of change for undocumented students.

For this study, I used a combination of purposive and snowball sampling. Purposive sampling meant that the participants I contacted for this study were not random and were chosen deliberately and purposefully. Researchers employ purposive sampling in qualitative studies to obtain all perspectives and a broad range of information that will allow the researcher to answer the research question best. (Yin, 2011). The participants were recruited through my existing professional network at the USC Center for Urban Education first, then through public

information on undocumented student ally practitioners at CCCs in southern California. I sent recruitment emails to 60 practitioners located at 24 institutions. When practitioners expressed interest in participating, I emailed them with more information and an informed consent document, offered to answer any questions, and offered times to speak or schedule the interview. Following interviews with participants, they were asked to identify others involved with the events or undocumented student support. Recruitment emails also went out to those practitioners until the data seemed adequately saturated–meaning I began to hear similar themes repeat themselves among the participants.

I collected 27 interviews from practitioners at sixteen CCCs. Of the 27 participants, 10 were the only participants from their community college. Three colleges had two participants each. Two more colleges had three participants, and one had five participants. Table 2 shows the participants organized by college and role. To ensure confidentiality, I removed the names of the institutions and replaced them with a number. All participants are identified using a pseudonym that the participant chose or that I gave to them. Furthermore, specific participant titles indicating their role on campus were collapsed into larger role categories (i.e., staff, faculty, counselor, director, administrator). I interviewed ten staff, four faculty, five counselors, four directors, and four administrators. I did not systematically collect information on the practitioners' identities to ensure the confidentiality of the participants. However, most participants presented as people of color, and some disclosed their racial and social identities in the interviews.

Table 2

Participants by College and Role

College	Participant	Role	College	Participant	Role
C1	1. Felipe 2. Jesus	Faculty Faculty	C9	15. Mayra	Administrator
C2	3. Lorena	Staff	C10	16. Dario	Counselor*
C3	4. Alicia 5. Brenda 6. Mark	Counselor Director Faculty	C11	17. Martin	Staff*
C4	7. Sonia	Staff*	C12	18. Xiomara	Staff*
C5	8. Nicholas	Director	C13	19. Alma	Counselor*
C6	9. Ana	Staff*	C14	20. Daniel 21. Pedro	Administrator Staff*
C7	10. April 11. Jennifer	Staff* Director*	C15	22. Denise	Director*
C8	12. Barbara 13. Cynthia 14. Rosario	Staff Staff Staff*	C16	23. Bernardo 24. Carmen 25. Carlos 26. Elsa 27. Hector	Counselor* Administrator Administrator* Counselor Faculty

Note: * Indicates the position had formal duties pertaining to undocumented student support.

3.2 Southern California Community College Context

The participants represented sixteen California community colleges (CCCs) across southern California. There are several reasons for the focus on this area. One reason is my connection to community college practitioners through my work at the USC Center for Urban Education and, later, the USC Race and Equity Center. My relationships with practitioners and

the reputation of the organizations I am a part of provided access and trust in some community college spaces.

However, community colleges in California are particularly appropriate sites to study undocumented support because California is home to the largest population of undocumented people (Pew Research Center, 2016) and because community colleges remain the largest points of access to higher education for undocumented students compared to the California State University and University of California system (Negrón-Gonzalez, 2017). CCCs have a mission of providing academic and vocational instruction to all students who need it (The Donahoe Higher Education Act of 1960). This mission informs the culture and norms of the college and the practitioners within it.

Furthermore, there are calls in California for institutions of higher education to show and provide support for undocumented students. Several legislative bills have passed the state house and senate requiring the CCCs to designate a campus liaison for undocumented students and suggest institutions adopt USRCs on campus (See Student support services: Dreamer Resource Liaisons A.B. 1645, 2019). Thus, most CCCs have adopted some kind of support for undocumented students–albeit varying widely. (California Dreamers Project, 2018). Relatedly, the CCC system has emphasized equity in its vision and goals to address the disparities in outcomes across identity groups. The CCC chancellor's office rolled out a framework for the work of community colleges called Vision 2030, which emphasizes equity in success, access, and support (CCCCO, 2024). The framework suggests that equity "requires meeting the unique needs of current and prospective learners regardless of age, race, socioeconomic status and previous educational attainment" (CCCCO, 2024). Although citizenship status is not explicit in this explanation, there is no reason to believe that the

chancellor's office would exclude undocumented students from this definition. There is evidence to suggest that equity has become part of the recognizable culture of CCC's even if it is addressed superficially in practice (Ching, Felix, & Castro, 2020; Meraz, 2022). Practitioners at these community colleges will be working within this unique equity context.

Additionally, I bounded my recruitment to CCCs located in Southern California, within areas where it is general knowledge that there is a high concentration of undocumented students and families. Meeting this criterion will ensure that the sites I chose could not point to a dearth of undocumented students at their institution as a legitimate explanation for not providing services.

3.3 Data Collection Strategies

The primary source of data for this study consisted of semi-structured interviews with practitioners across sixteen institutions. I conducted the interviews using the Zoom video-conferencing software. A Zoom meeting allowed the participant and me to see each other, which was important for building trust and rapport with the participants. As part of my analysis, I also reviewed 16 websites, social media posts, and relevant state and community college policies to understand the participants' institutional context and the breadth of services for undocumented students at each of the sixteen institutions. Throughout the process I wrote memos that captured my thoughts on an interview, and my processes for analyzing the interviews and coding the documents.

The interviews explored 1) the nature and timeline of institutionalized support for undocumented students at the institution; 2) why and how participants became involved with undocumented student issues on campus; 3) participants' perception of the institutional culture toward undocumented students; 4) the process by which support for undocumented students was

adopted and institutionalized; 5) the role of participants and their allies in the process of change. This broad line of questioning allowed for the interviewees' most salient ideas to emerge.

I crafted the interview questions by aligning them with the research questions, theoretical frameworks, and specific propositions based on those theoretical frames. For example, research question three asked about how practitioners navigate the organizational constraints and opportunities as they act in support of undocumented students. This research question mapped most closely to propositions five and six, which suggest important elements to understanding the constraints and opportunities offered by the organization, including a) theories, narratives, frames, and b) whether an action is considered appropriate or anomalous practices. Subsequently, I indicated the interview questions that would help me best understand the elements of the theory suggested for research question three. Among the questions is, "What would you say is your institution's stance toward undocumented students?" In this way, I laid out my reasoning for the initial interview questions. See the interview protocol in Appendix A.

3.4 Data Analysis

Merriam & Tisdell (2016) suggest that data analysis of qualitative data is not a linear process but rather an iterative process that can span the various stages of the project. Here I explain how I reviewed documents, and engaged in thematic analysis of my interviews. As a first step to data analysis, I examined web pages and other documents. I began by searching each participant's college website for anything related to undocumented students. Next, I followed any relevant links to other resources or social media accounts. These documents were first used as initial contextual analysis to understand the support landscape for undocumented students and corroborate the information provided in the interviews. A list of support services guided the analysis of the documents. As part of the document/website review I created a crosswalk

indicating the types of support available at each institution. The types of support included whether the campus had an undocumented student resource center on campus, whether they had a student group/club, a formal group of higher education practitioners dedicated to undocumented student issues, on campus legal services, workshops, a dedicated counselor, and ally training facilitated by on-campus employees. When the website and other materials were unclear as to whether a type of support was offered, I cross-referenced the interviews conducted at that institution to see if there was any mention of that support type. If the support type was not mentioned in any interview done with an employee of the institution and was not found on any website or campus materials, it was assumed not to be available at the institution.

I conducted a thematic analysis of the interviews using inductive and deductive approaches to generate codes, categories, and themes. I employed 3 stages of coding and analysis. An initial familiarization stage included read-throughs and “rudimentary analysis” (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016, p. 200) consisting of memos and additional notes. This provided a general sense of the data (Creswell, 2009). Although, I made note of ideas and subjects that were rising to the top in the interviews, there was also an inherently deductive approach to this read through, given that prior to data the collection, I created a list of codes based on the frameworks I believed would inform the study and my research questions (See Appendix B for the initial codebook). This codebook inevitably informed what I paid attention to in the initial read throughs.

In the second stage focused on identifying codes and organizing those codes into themes. First, I identified units of text that (a) are relevant to the study, (b) can stand by themselves without additional information, and labeled them with an in vivo term (Creswell, 2009; Lincoln & Guba, 1985), and (c) related to general themes and categories identified in the initial memos

and notes. Although I did have some pre-conceived notions of codes gleaned from my conceptual framework, I also allowed for reflexive analysis. As I coded more transcripts, the codes became more “refined, conceptual, and abstract” (Saldaña, 2022). Thus, this round of coding also included a iterative and reflexive revisiting of the transcripts coded earlier in the process to capture additional patterns as additional transcripts provided more information and points of comparison (Boeiji, 2002). This first round of coding produced 120 codes.

The second coding round included looking for patterns and themes in my codes. In this process some similar codes merged and some codes deleted if not sufficiently saturated in the data or necessary to answer the research questions. Some categories and themes emerged in this round. For example, initial codes like “isolated,” “defeated,” “angry,” and “intimidated” were collapsed into “negative emotions,” and “second guessing” was collapsed into “gaslighting.” Every time codes were merged or collapsed the text ascribed to the codes was reviewed to ensure it still accurately captured the text. The third round of coding included combining codes (into one code or splitting them into subcodes) and placing them into categories that “look alike and feel alike” (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Here negative emotions, and gaslighting went under the theme of emotional labor.

There was not always a clear-cut line between the second and third round of coding because I finalized some codes and categories early in the coding process (e.g., codes for social, professional, and personal identities), while I took longer to ensure that other codes still accurately portrayed the participant’s experiences and perspectives. Appendix C gives an example of codes in the first, second, and third round of coding.

In the third stage, I brought in the conceptual framework more explicitly and began organizing codes into larger categories and themes based on whether they contributed to answering the research questions. This stage ended with 64 total codes.

Establishing validity and reliability in qualitative studies relies on several methodological strategies that a researcher can employ throughout the study's design, data collection, and analysis. Internal reliability (credibility), or the notion that the study's results represent reality. Although most qualitative studies, such as this one, operate under the premise that there is no single reality, the researcher should show that the study accurately depicts peoples' construction of reality. One can establish reliability through triangulation, discrepant evidence, and research design decisions.

Triangulation is a method to ensure that findings were not the result of "a single method, a single source, or a single investigator's blinders" (Patton, 2015, p. 674). It involves multiple sources of data and employing multiple methods. For this study, I collected the perspectives of more than one participant at six of the 16 institutions. There were also experiences of similarly positioned individuals across institutions who shared similar perspectives on the change in support of undocumented students. This provided the opportunity for different perspectives on the same phenomenon and was used to assess if one person's account was credible or if any individual account deviated significantly from the rest. A second way is to triangulate using different data collection methods. In this study, I also collected documents and information from public websites and social media accounts that validated information relayed to me through the interviews. The third way I promoted credible findings was to ensure that I collected enough data to reach *saturation*—which means that hear the same topics repeatedly in the interviews.

Fourth, during the data analysis, I actively sought disconfirming evidence in my data, which are findings that disconfirmed the model I expected to uncover. Rival explanations should be explored and rigorously examined for their own validity and reliability (Maxwell, 2004). Disconfirming evidence and saturation was important to this part of the analysis. Some codes created a-priori based on the five tempered strategies from Meyerson's framework simply did not reach saturation, and in some cases were not apparent at all within the interviews. Here, deductive reasoning did not adequately capture the perspectives of the participants. I relied on inductive reasoning to give me a better understanding of how participants were making a difference for undocumented students. Even when codes were created through inductive processes disconfirming evidence was necessary to ensure the process of refining, collapsing, and categorizing codes into themes. For example, I believed I could categorize practitioners' tactics into one of three overarching strategies: tempered strategy, educational strategy, and an external change strategy. However, when I revisited the interviews, the practitioners' perspectives and actions did not support that categorization. Tactics often fell into multiple categories and practitioners used all three to varying degrees in varying situations and did not directly describe them as strategies. Finally, in the cases where there were one or two practitioner's perspectives deviated from the rest of the practitioners, but not in a way that I deemed disconfirmed the theme, I noted it in the findings.

Finally, reflexivity is another way to ensure the integrity of research findings. How I influenced the data and how I interpreted that data through my own worldview helps the reader understand the data collection and conclusions of the study.

Data collected in a qualitative study is difficult to replicate with the same results and should not be generalized to other situations. However, there is much to learn from qualitative

research that can be *transferable* to other studies. Here, instead of the researcher of the original study having the burden of creating a replicable study as in quantitative research, it is the primary responsibility of the researchers seeking to replicate the research to start their study with the hypothesis from previous research. Thus, the validity of the data, as ensured by the process above, should allow for sound conclusions from which other researchers form their hypotheses.

3.5 Researcher's Role

In qualitative research, the interviewer is the primary data collection tool. Returning to the critical constructivist view of knowledge production, it is important to remember that the researcher’s perspectives, biases, and values shape how the data is collected and interpreted. As such, the researcher must engage in “the process of a continual internal dialogue and critical self-evaluation of the researcher’s positionality as well as the active acknowledgment and explicit recognition that this position may affect the research process and outcome” (Berger, 2015, p. 220).

I bring many identities to an interview that may affect how I approach an interview and data analysis and how an interviewee approaches me (my insider/outsider status). My identity and experiences as a Latina woman in higher education informed my perspective that higher education should serve the public good and has a role in social justice for minoritized groups who have historically and continually experienced oppression. It also informed my search for understanding how higher education perpetuates inequality inherent in society. This perception guided my assumptions and the frameworks I used to inform this study.

I began work on undocumented student issues at the National Forum on Higher Education for the Public Good at the University of Michigan. Here we engaged in research on how systems of education became barriers to undocumented student access to higher education. I

was part of a team convening experts on the subject, including scholars, activists, and undocumented students, to discuss mitigating the barriers. There, I learned about the complex issues that undocumented students had to navigate to survive in higher education systems. I was interested in policy then, and wanted to understand how state policy supporting undocumented students spread across the country and was being implemented at college campuses. After my coursework, I moved home to California and began working at the Center for Urban Education. Through my research and in-depth work with community college practitioners, I came to a more complex understanding of racial equity and equity-mindedness. I was also exposed to the unique ways community colleges operated to serve equity and uphold inequity.

At this point, I began to question whether undocumented student issues should be the focus of my dissertation. I was extra aware of my privilege as a documented citizen of Puerto Rican descent, and I did not want to co-opt or speak for undocumented students, knowing that many incredible scholars are or were undocumented themselves or have mixed-status families and can better speak to these issues. I had to carefully consider my role in dismantling inequity for undocumented students.

My new role at CUE had me working closely with practitioners in many roles throughout the community college. It exposed me to the many taken-for-granted practices that remained unquestioned if it were not for our ability to help practitioners step back from those processes and systematically ask questions. I was developing my critical consciousness of these educational spaces. At the same time, I was learning about California's unique policy context pertaining to undocumented students. I was also meeting practitioners who had formal roles serving undocumented students and asking them questions about the support that was or was not available and why. As someone who facilitates professional development for practitioners and

who may one day become a practitioner at a community college, I shifted the focus of my dissertation proposal from the national policy perspective on undocumented student issues to the practitioners' perspective and role on change for undocumented students in California community colleges. I hoped engaging in this dissertation would help me find my role in supporting undocumented students and dismantling the taken-for-granted systems that sustain their inequitable experiences and outcomes.

I am aware that being a documented citizen is a privileged identity that shapes how I have interpreted this research study as well as how I put this study into action. As a documented citizen who works in higher education, I care how colleges and universities respond to undocumented student needs. I chose to understand change on campus in support of undocumented students, not through the lens of undocumented students themselves, but rather from the perspectives of practitioners in higher education to better understand their role (as well as mine as I continue my career in this field). I have reflected on how these privileged identities may affect my worldview and whether the participants view me as an insider to be trusted with information or an outsider. I leaned on my work with the National Forum, organizing institutional discussions about undocumented student issues and the relationships with administrators and other higher education practitioners that I have met through my positions as CUE and REC staff to help me gain access and trust.

It was clear to me that participants believed my positionality was important. It was not uncommon for participants to ask me to share why I was interested in this topic or ask for more context about the information I was looking for before they agreed to the interview. For example, two participants asked me to share the interview protocol with them before the interview, saying that it would help their decision to participate. I interpreted these asks as assessing my position

on undocumented student issues through my interview questions. Participants seemed more open to share once I shared my professional work related to equity. There was one encounter with an administrator who agreed to an interview but then made it clear she did not believe I should be asking questions about change for undocumented students at her campus. This may have been due to the topic's divisive and political nature. In this case, I did not have the trust necessary for this participant to share her perspective with me openly.

3.6 Limitations

As with any study, there were limitations. One limitation is that participants self-selected into the study. These practitioners were already motivated to share their experiences with undocumented student support. This study may have missed the perspectives of participants involved in change in support of undocumented students but who perhaps felt their actions were so tempered they were not significant. Another possibility is that I missed the perspectives of tempered radicals who did not feel comfortable or safe sharing their perspectives. These may have been practitioners at community colleges with more hostile contexts. Without these perspectives, I cannot say.

Another limitation is that I did not collect identifying information on participants to protect their anonymity when discussing sensitive topics. As a result, I received that information only from participants willing to share their identifiers with me in the interview. Racial identifiers, immigration status and other identifiers would have added to some of the narratives in the findings. These identifiers were left out because I did not have that information. Although I left many identifiers out of the narrative of the findings, I undoubtedly made assumptions about their race, gender, and other identities that may have been reflected in how I interpreted their interviews.

3.7 Summary of Chapter Three

This study uses qualitative inquiry and exploratory interview methodology to understand why and how practitioners act for change for undocumented students at community colleges. The primary source of data was semi-structured interviews. I also looked at documents, web pages, and social media accounts. I used a combination of sampling that involved intentionally selecting participants from community colleges in Southern California and asking participants for referrals to others they believed I should invite for an interview. These individuals were somehow involved with undocumented student support at their college. I ultimately interviewed 27 participants with various roles across 16 community colleges.

Data analysis consisted of an iterative process of coding the interviews and combining codes into categories and themes. I triangulated the interview data with the data I received from the review of online websites and documents and reflected on my values, beliefs, and experiences that shaped the way I approached the methods and analysis in this study. There are limitations in the self-selection of participants and in not systematically gathering social identities of participants.

Chapter 4 Practitioner Identities as Sources of Motivations and Misalignment

Understanding practitioners' motivations– or the reasons or causes to participate in supporting undocumented students–is important because it is the foundation on which practitioners choose to act for change (Pinard, 2011). Scholars across disciplines have not agreed on the definition or theory of motivation (Reeve, 2016). Social movements literature describes motivations as composed primarily of grievances (felt sentiments and threats) and deprivations (objective conditions). Motivation shapes an individual's understanding of the problems they feel they need to fix and how individuals fix those problems.

In this chapter, I explore identity as the source of two main motivations that surfaced in the data and what these identities and motivations communicate about the misalignment between the values and beliefs of the practitioners in my study and the colleges where they work. Relating to undocumented students' struggles and fulfilling their professional identity as educators and advocates were initial motivators for action for many participants. When practitioners witness or can relate to the struggles experienced by undocumented students, they experience a misalignment between what they perceive students are experiencing and what is happening on college campuses.

This section first explores the practitioners' social, professional, and personal identities shared during the interview. The section then discusses the role of these identities in the participant's motivations to act for change for undocumented students. Here, identity refers to our sense of self that defines our social roles and groups or the unique characteristics that make

people different (Burke, 2020). In the tempered radicals framework, Meyerson asserts that social identities are fundamental to the formation of tempered radicals. It is through social identities that people within organizations feel like they are being treated differently or develop philosophical values that are in opposition to the organization (Meyerson, 2003). Motivations form from the need to resolve the dissonance created by these oppositions. Meyerson also notes that in addition to social identities as a source of opposition to the organization, other types of identities can also lead to a misalignment. This section will show how professional and other personal identities translate into philosophical values and beliefs in opposition to community college values.

Kezar and Lester (2011) explored the role of identity and motivation in their participants' conception and approach to grassroots leadership in higher education. Their study looked at practitioners leading change efforts across many social justice causes. Therefore, the identities and motivations of those practitioners varied widely, and it was difficult to draw out the similarities across practitioners.

Furthermore, literature focusing on undocumented student ally practitioners or institutional agents might mention practitioners' identities but have not looked at the role of identity in how they approach undocumented student support or change on campus. Given the importance of an individual's identity to the way they understand the world, it should come as no surprise that all 27 practitioners mentioned at least one social, professional, or personal identity that was relevant to change in support of undocumented students and a large majority (n=23) noted more than one identity within and across the three identity categories.

4.1 Practitioners’ Social, Professional, and Personal Identities

Social identities focus on the socially constructed groups that define who we are, based on physical, social, and mental characteristics. Twenty-two of the 27 practitioners mentioned a social identity in the context of their interview. Social identities mentioned by the interviewees included their race/ethnicity (n=7), gender identity (n=4), sexuality (n=2), first-generation status (n=4), citizenship status (undocumented or previously undocumented person (n=7), or documented, U.S. citizen (n=5). Citizenship status and race/ethnicity were the social identities mentioned most by practitioners. For a minority of the practitioners, their gender identity, sexuality, and first-generation status also played a role.

Unlike social identities, which are broad categories relatively fixed in society, there is a more diverse and dynamic pool of professional identities. *Professional identities* have to do with how individuals see themselves as professionals and connect with other members of that profession within society’s expectations of that profession (Heled & Davidovitch, 2021). Indeed, some practitioners in this study had very specific professional backgrounds that led to particular experiences, knowledge, skills, values, and beliefs. For example, Carmen indicated having a background in the legal profession before her current position in the administration. This experience was uniquely useful to her work with undocumented students. Others indicated professional identities by couching statements in the phrase “as a/an [insert profession]…,” which allowed them to share perspectives on something else (e.g. motivation, fear, or belief) from their particular role on campus, whether that be a program director, or a counselor, or faculty member. The practitioners who simply stated their role as a fact (e.g., I am a counselor) without indicating a value, belief, or experience that informed what they did for undocumented students were not considered among the practitioners with strong professional identities.

There were also some similarities among professional identities. More than half of the practitioners (n=13) explicitly or strongly alluded to advocating for undocumented students. Although being an advocate can be a personal identity, I included it as a professional identity here because most of the interviewees spoke of being an advocate in the context of their professional role. In other words, their understanding of the profession meant they should be advocates. I explore this further below.

Six practitioners had previous experience working with undocumented students; half had professional experiences outside of higher education, and the remaining three had experience working with undocumented students at colleges or universities where they had previously worked. Finally, six practitioners indicated they were new to the college or shared something significant about when they were new to the college. Having an identity as a "new professional" brings with it its own expectations, perceptions, and values that may differ for those in the same profession who are not new to the organization. Those expectations, perceptions, and values can change over time as an individual becomes more embedded in the organization.

4.2 Identities as a Source of Motivation

At the root of tempered radicalism in higher education is a disconnect between "the self" and the dominant culture of the college (Martin, 2006). This disconnect leads individuals to either change the college to align with their values or risk reducing, hiding, or changing the self to conform (or at least appear to conform) to the organization's values. The practitioners I talked to connected their identities to their motivations to support undocumented students. These connections illustrate the tensions between themselves and the college. Here I will explore two main motivations from the interviews and how they illustrate practitioners' dissonance with organizational values. These motivations are (1) to mitigate undocumented students' struggles

and (2) to fulfill their purpose or role as a higher education practitioner. These motivations were not mutually exclusive. Many of the practitioners mentioned both motivations throughout their interviews. It is important to understand these motivations and what they communicate about what moves these practitioners toward action.

4.2.1 Personal Need to Mitigate Undocumented Student Struggles

Many practitioners' identities served as windows into undocumented students' challenges. In other words, they could understand or empathize with undocumented students' struggles and aim to reduce the barriers to their success. The identities that informed this particular motivation tended to be social or personal identities that made fulfilling the needs of undocumented students a self-interest or passion.

Practitioners who were undocumented at the time of the interview or at some previous time offered the most obvious examples here. These individuals could point to their own experiences navigating the institution as reasons to want to make a change for future students. For example, Alma, a counselor at her community college stated:

> I am also undocumented. And when I was going to school, I never imagined myself working in education because I had really bad experiences in education. I think those experiences eventually inspired me to continue and get my master's degree; to try to work in spaces where we can continue to support undocumented students. I went to a community college that was primarily White, and I had people tell me that I couldn't go to college because I didn't have a social security number. I knew that was a lie. So, I advocated for myself because I didn't want the same negative interactions I was getting at the beginning. That experience has shaped how I serve students now. I make sure that our campus as a whole understands that we have a Dreamer's Resource Center. Regardless of

> status, if a student has DACA or no DACA, they can still go to college and be eligible for financial assistance and a show of support.

In Alma's case, her social identity as an undocumented person meant she had negative experiences in her community college journey. She is, therefore, able to relate to the struggles that current undocumented students are facing at her college and is hoping to prevent those experiences for the undocumented students she supports. Because she is undocumented, this aligns with her desire to be treated equitably as an undocumented person.

Practitioners' motivation and identity were deeply connected when they identified as undocumented. Sonia was a student services staff member at a different community college. She stated, "I think it's always hard because I am undocumented [laughs]. It's hard not to take it personally when it hasn't been okay to speak up for undocumented students." At a third community college, Martin, also a student services staff member recounted his experience as an undocumented student:

> So, I'm actually undocumented myself. I'm an alum. And when I went to this school, there was absolutely nothing supporting undocumented students. Luckily, somehow, we knew this one person who worked under our EOPS office, and so she would kind of just bring in undocumented people and try to help them as much as she could…I was actually very heavily involved when I was on campus. I was president of a few clubs. But I never disclosed my undocumented status because of that fear, because I knew there weren't other resources or services that could help me if I did disclose it.

Martin personally experienced these deprivations at the college where he now worked. He experienced not having access to institutionalized support or formal institutional agents. He relied on informal institutional agents who were volunteering their time to support

undocumented students. These experiences fueled Martin's goal to "increase the visibility and support" for undocumented students. April was in a similar role as Martin at her community college, and shared a similar experience of not having as much institutionalized support as a student and how that informed what she expressed as "the point" of her struggle and related activism. "I might not have been able to taste the fruits of my hard work. But it helped future students and future generations, and that is the point. That is the goal. To be able to continuously advocate, continuously fight."

Understanding and empathizing with undocumented student struggles was not exclusive to those who identified as undocumented. Other identities also played a role in how practitioners developed their understanding of undocumented student struggles. Mayra was an administrator at her community college. She related to the undocumented student's struggle through her identity and experiences as a woman of color.

> I've been around long enough to be a part of the old Leticia A[2] days prior to AB 540 and then AB 540 and then of course DACA, and with every new phase, there have been things that we can and cannot provide legally. If I didn't find loopholes even for myself as a woman of color to try to navigate, then I wouldn't be where I am. Many of us wouldn't be where we are. And that same approach has been taken in my work and in my service to undocumented students.

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[2] "Leticia A" is in reference to an Alameda Superior Court ruling in 1985 that undocumented students should be treated as California residents for the purposes of paying in-state tuition at all California public colleges and universities. Students who met residency were also eligible for state financial aid. It was overturned in 1990.

The experience of having a different minoritized identity plays a role here in that Mayra had to similarly find loopholes to navigate an institution of higher education that was not built for her. This experience allowed her to empathize with the undocumented student experience.

Some practitioners were not undocumented themselves but had close family or friends who were, making the struggles undocumented students were facing at the institution also feel personal even though they had not experienced those struggles. This was the case with Barbara, who served as student services staff at her college: “I had family members, cousins, that have chosen the community college route because they can’t afford a four-year. My mom used to be undocumented. So I think for me it was just personal.”

At another institution, Alicia, a counselor, also felt close to the undocumented student struggle. Although she did not specifically mention that any of her family was undocumented, being close to family in Mexico, her place of birth, gave her a connection to students even though she did not personally experience that struggle.

> I was actually born in Mexico. I am documented. I got my citizenship through my grandmother at a very early age, probably 11 years old. I had my residency, so I didn't struggle through the education system. But in my heart, I've always… I was born in Mexico. I'm really close to my family in Mexico, my ties. All of that was like, wait a minute, these are my people that are struggling.

Practitioners who mentioned relating to or understanding undocumented student struggles as motivation for their involvement in taking action for this student population often did so in the context of social or personal identities. There was a personal understanding of how important it was to mitigate the particular struggles they had experienced or had witnessed those close to them experience.

These motivations forged by these understandings of practitioners' selves carried with them beyond the initial choice to participate in supporting undocumented students. These also came up as ongoing motivators. Alma, for example, who I previously mentioned wanting to support undocumented students because of her negative experiences as an undocumented student in higher education, talked about how a policy change that she pushed for was so important because it could affect her undocumented father and his ability to access courses at a lower cost.

> Part of it is that it's personal. It's personal because it could also affect my parents, my dad, if he needs some classes. He was taking non-credit classes before, which was great, but then he was like, "OK, I took all the non-credit classes I want to take," but I was like, "If you take one more class instead of paying $150 you are going to have to pay $1000, and that's a lot of money. So now, with this new education code[3], he can take advantage. And I'm like [begins to tear up], I'm doing it for all of our parents. So that's been a great part of it.

Alma has a very personal connection to the real consequences that actions could have on undocumented students. In this case, her father. Alma can "see" individual and institutional action and inaction for undocumented students through the lens of her identities, which motivates her to be a part of the change she wants to see at her college.

4.2.2 Fulfill Their Purpose/Role as Higher Education Practitioners

[3] Referring to the change in the California education code prompted by SB 554 signed into law in 2019 which amends sections 76001 and 76002, and adds new sections 52620 and 52621. This allows undocumented people who have not yet received the GED to enroll in adult education classes and take up to 11 units of community college courses without any fees.

Practitioners' professional identities also facilitated the motivation to act in support of undocumented students. However, unlike social and personal identities that allowed practitioners to relate in a personal manner to undocumented student struggles, professional identities aligned more closely to a discussion of the purpose or role of a higher education practitioner. Practitioners communicated a commitment to the values attached to their positions and a responsibility based on their profession. The quotations below illustrate how the practitioners interpreted their professional role to serve undocumented students.

Many of the practitioners identified as an advocate for students. As I mentioned above, although an identity as an advocate can exist outside an individual's professional role—such as being an advocate in the community— all of the practitioners in this study tied being an advocate to their professional role at the institution. For example, April noted, "That's what being part of this role is: consistently being an active advocate for our students and making sure that they have all of these resources and all of the support they need." April's formal role included supporting undocumented students on her campus. Therefore, her advocacy identity aligns very closely with her formal role, and it makes sense for her to be motivated by the need to fulfill her role to the fullest. She sees it as her responsibility to advocate for undocumented students. However, there were others whose formal job descriptions did not include working with undocumented students. Carmen was an administrator, and she talked about her frustration with her college's definition of her professional role and her need to help as an educator.

> There's no understanding that all those [undocumented] people are still asking and needing, and [the institution] could say like, "Oh, but that's not your job." That was never my actual job to help them. But they're in education, and I'm an educator, so I have to support them.

Serving undocumented students is not in Carmen's specific administrative job description. However, her professional identity as an educator brings particular values, which means she still feels responsible for supporting undocumented students. Ana was at another college, but, similar to Carmen, communicated a duty to support undocumented students as a staff member involved in student service programs. "It was just something, we, as in those in higher education, have to do." She continued, "As we should with all students, we should provide [undocumented students] with what they need. That is the whole point of the special programs. Right? We have students who have more disadvantages. So, we just have to."

For Mayra, her identity as an advocate went beyond just supporting undocumented students. It was a belief in the role of higher education for every student–that any student who attends college needs holistic support and deserves the opportunity to be successful.

> I have always advocated for students to provide everything possible to maximize their opportunities and success, whatever their journey. From my perspective, it's always been not an issue of race or gender or legal status. It's just always been an issue of supporting whoever comes through our doors holistically and doing everything possible to ensure they succeed.

Practitioners were not always actively looking or thinking about undocumented students before they got involved in actively supporting them. Sometimes, a practitioner's motivation to work with undocumented students began when they got to know them and their situations as part of their job. Elsa worked in counseling and financial aid and spoke about the organic way that undocumented student issues came into her professional purview of addressing gaps, "To be honest, I didn't intentionally decide I'm going to advocate for this particular student population. It just organically developed by addressing gaps in services that are very obvious." Elsa believed it

was her professional duty to address student service gaps. Undocumented students became a focus because many undocumented students were experiencing the same barriers in the financial aid systems.

Those practitioners who had prior experience working with undocumented students, whether at another community college or a community organization, already came with motivations and ideas on how to support and act when coming into the institution. Daniel, an administrator, stated

> I've had experience with undocumented students in the past. I [worked] at the DREAM resource center at a different college and the faculty advisor for undocumented student clubs at other colleges. I was interested in doing this at [this college], and it just kind of worked out that I was in EOPS at the time. So, I started seeing students who were in EOPS who were undocumented, but also opening that up to non-EOPS [undocumented] students.

Coming to a new institution with an understanding of undocumented student struggles and experience with a different college environment of support allowed practitioners like Daniel to carry that understanding and experience into their current role. Carmen also brought skills from a prior career outside of higher education. She noted

> I became involved because I have a legal background. Actually, it was at the end of the Obama administration; the elections hadn't happened yet, and you can just see what was coming, right? Because I had specialized knowledge and access to people, I just decided on my own to hold DACA renewals and DACA applications…when Trump was elected, it was really difficult for me, politically speaking. I remember not wanting to come into the office the day after the election, but I forced myself to come. And some students were

> crying on the lawn, unsure whether they would be picked up. My own kid asked, "Are we going to be deported? Is my dad going to be deported?" [Her voice cracks, and her eyes water] I'm sorry. I just felt like there was, again, a need. So, I think the election happened on Tuesday, and by Friday, two other women and I organized. We called it "A Loving Community" or something like that, where we had different speakers; we had mental health professionals, we had an immigration attorney advocate.

Carmen's legal experience was a very transferable skill for supporting undocumented students, especially in preparation for, and in the wake of, the election of President Trump. This identity as someone with this professional skill motivated her to take action that would provide legal protections in a particularly precarious political environment for undocumented students.

Only one practitioner mentioned a part of his role that he did not feel had to do with undocumented student support. He identified as an advocate for undocumented students, having worked closely with the undocumented student club at his campus to organize demonstrations to the board of trustees for more institutionalized support. He talked about his faculty role and being part of the academic senate. However, when he mentioned the academic senate, he said it was "tangentially related." Later in the interview, I asked him to elaborate on his role in the academic senate. He stated

> Yes, I think I've tried to keep my support for undocumented students a little bit separate from the academic senate. I want to support students, and there are a lot of issues, but I've tried not to make the Senate my passion for one thing become a pet project of the other thing and try to keep those separate. The academic senate is not the best place to get things done either in the sense of making a real change. We can pass resolutions, and we can pass supportive things, but it's only one aspect of shared governance.

Mark believed that actively supporting and advocating undocumented students in the academic senate was not effective, and therefore not a place spend his energy taking action. This perspective that a particular role did not help support undocumented students and the idea that undocumented student issues were a "pet project" was unique in the interviews. However, he found other ways to use his faculty role to support student movements and advocacy on and off campus.

Other practitioners perceived all of their roles as crucial to providing some access to a particular set of skills or areas of the college that they might leverage. For example, Barbara stated, "They wanted advocates that weren't students. 'What can you do in your role?' I think that's where I started getting involved. I have this certain ability. I'm staff, so I have certain access to certain spaces." Nicholas also shared this sentiment as a director at another institution, stating, "My thought was, as a director in [my office], what can I do within my realm to advocate and to support anything that we're doing on campus?" Like most other participants, Barbara and Nicholas believed there was a role for everyone at the college. Their positions motivated them to continue supporting undocumented students.

The emergence of these two motivations in connection to practitioners' identities aligns with the idea that motivations "can vary from self-interest or passion to sense of commitment or responsibility (Kezar & Lester, 2011, p. 41). The quotations also show how practitioners' understanding of who they are moves them, particularly when they perceive a need that is not being met or disagree with an organization's actions. The following section explicitly explores how these data illustrate a misalignment between practitioner and institutional values.

4.3 Misalignment Between Practitioner Identities and Dominant Institutional Values

The previous section shows the connection between social, personal, and professional identities and motivation to support undocumented students and be involved with change. As I mentioned, motivations are a compilation of grievances and deprivations. Grievances, here, are about feeling a sense of injustice or threat. Grievances are not always tangible but rather a feeling that something is unjust. Deprivations are the more tangible partner to grievances, focusing on the conditions that make something unjust (Pinard, 2011).

To feel that something is not right and must be changed—that is—to feel a grievance or deprivation, there must exist some dissonance between how an individual believes an environment should be and their perception of the environment as it is (Meyerson, 2003). The quotations from practitioners that tie their identities to their motivations can clarify what this misalignment is for them. Table 3 further delineates the practitioners' motivations by providing the specific grievances and deprivations mentioned in their quotes.

If we return to the case of Alma, her identity as an undocumented person and daughter of undocumented parents was a source of motivation to mitigate undocumented student struggles. She mentions two important areas to her: making sure students know they can go to college and access financial aid. In stating her motivation, she also communicates her grievance (based on her experienced deprivation) that undocumented students are commonly given false information by other practitioners in higher education. Alma's grievance is common. Undocumented students often receive incorrect or incomplete information from practitioners about whether they qualify for financial aid, enrollment into particular programs, resources on campus, or other undocumented student policies (Hooker, McHugh, & Mathay, 2015; Negrón-Gonzalez, 2017;

Luedke & Corral, 2021; Nienhusser, Vega, & Carquin, 2016; Muñoz & Vigil, 2018). Pulling from her personal experience, she also describes higher education as a primarily White space.

Other practitioners pointed to the specific ways that undocumented students continue to struggle with their institutional grievances. Barbara alludes to her grievance that college is not affordable for undocumented students and that potential undocumented students might choose not to attend college because they do not know their career options after college without a work permit. Carmen shares this grievance at her institution as well, "Statewide, financial aid is a fucking mess. Nobody seems to be clarifying it for undocumented students." Not providing adequate financial aid support is one way she feels that the community college "abandons" undocumented students.

Bernardo also worked at Carmen's institution but had his distinct grievances. He felt that the lack of physical space made it difficult to have stable services for students: "There's no stability for providing the services necessarily because there's no one there every day, you know, for students. There's no physical space on campus for undocumented students at the moment." Bernardo and Carmen were not alone in mentioning the challenges and disadvantages of being undocumented students and navigating college as their grievance.

Some grievances did not focus on student struggles but rather on the other side of that coin: the lack of institutionalized or formal support from the institution. If we return to Martin's earlier quote, he relayed that one institutional agent acted as the only –informal– institutional support he was aware of when he was a student. Elsa noted obvious gaps for undocumented students, which she felt responsible for filling as an educator. Carmen points to the additional emotional labor suffered by undocumented students after the election of President Trump. Her

Table 3

Practitioners' Identities, Motivations, and Misalignment

Participant	Identity (Social, Professional, or Personal)	Motivation	Grievances/Witnessed Deprivation (Communicated Misalignment)	Quote
Alma	● Undocumented /Dreamer (Social) ● Daughter of undocumented parents (Personal)	● To mitigate undocumented student struggles ● Making sure undocumented students know they can go to college and get financial aid	● Higher education is primarily a White space where people lie to you if you are undocumented about whether you can go to college or receive financial aid ● (Higher education should be space where undocumented students feel they belong and where they receive correct information about accessing college and financial aid)	I am also undocumented. I currently hold DACA. And when I was going to school, I never imagined myself working in education, just because I have really bad experiences in education. But I think those experiences eventually inspired me to continue and get my master's degree; to try to work in spaces where we can continue to work and continue to support undocumented students. I went to a community college that was primarily White and I had people tell me that I couldn't go to college because I didn't have a social security number. I knew that was a lie. So, I advocated for myself. And then I think the personal interactions that I had affected the ways I sought help after, because I didn't want to get the same negative interactions that I was getting at the beginning. So, I just did things on my own and I wish that I would have been different now. So that experience has shaped how I serve students now. I make sure that our campus as a whole understands that we have a Dreamer's Resource Center. And regardless of status, if a student has DACA or no DACA they can still go to college and be eligible for financial assistance and a show of support.
Barbara	● Mixed status family/family who is undocumented (Personal) ● Worked on undocumented student issues at previous institution (Professional) ● Advocate (Professional)	● Fulfill their purpose/role as a higher education practitioner ● Personal need to help others like her family to prevent struggle	● Four-year institutions are not affordable for undocumented people ● Undocumented students don't go to college if they perceive they don't have work opportunities after college ● (College should be affordable for undocumented students and they should be aware of the opportunities to join the workforce after college)	I think for me it was just because it felt personal. I had family members, cousins, that have chosen the community college route because they can't afford a four year, or they go straight into work, into the fields because they don't have access to a work permit. My mom used to be undocumented, and so I think for me it was just personal.

Carmen	• Legal background (Professional) • Empath (Personal) • Mother (Personal) • Woman of color (Social)	• Fulfill their purpose/role as a higher education practitioner • -Using her professional skills to help • To mitigate undocumented student struggles -Deep empathy for students struggle	• The institution does not believe it is everyone's job to support undocumented students • In the time when undocumented students are needing the most support, the institution will not be there for them. • (It should be everyone's job in the college to support undocumented students and then they need it most, support should be there)	There's no understanding that all those [undocumented] people are still asking, and needing, and [the institution] could say like, "Oh, but that's not your job." That was never my actual job to help them. But they're in education and I'm an educator, so I have to support them. I became involved because I have a legal background. And actually, it was at the end of the Obama administration, the elections hadn't happened yet and you can just see what was coming, right. So, since I felt like I had specialized knowledge and access to people, I just decided on my own to hold DACA renewals and hold DACA applications…when Trump was elected, it was really I think difficult for me just politically speaking. I remember not wanting to come into the office, the day after the election, but I sort of forced myself to come. And there were just students crying on the lawn, unsure whether they would be picked up. My own kid like asked "are we going to be deported? Is my dad going to be deported?" And so under that, [her voice cracks and her eyes water] I'm sorry. I just felt like there was, again, a need. So, I think the election happened on Tuesday, that was Wednesday. By Friday myself and two other women organized...
Elsa	• Woman • Latina • Practitioner	• Fulfill their purpose/role as a higher education practitioner • her job to address obvious gaps	• Institution is not systematically addressing obvious gaps for undocumented students. • (When a college sees obvious gaps for undocumented students it should correct them)	To be honest, I didn't intentionally decide I'm going to be an advocate for this particular student population. It just organically developed by addressing gaps in services that are very obvious in my opinion.
Mayra	• Woman (Social) • Latina/ Person of Color (Social) • Advocate (Professional)	• Fulfill their purpose/role as a higher education practitioner • To find loopholes • Supporting students holistically	• Navigating higher education for minoritized groups involves finding loopholes in policy and practice • Higher education doesn't always maximize the opportunities for success by holistically supporting students • (Undocumented students should not have to find loopholes to navigate the institution and should be supported holistically)	I've been around long enough to be a part of the old Leticia A days prior to AB 540 and then AB 540 and then of course DACA, and with every new phase there have been things that we can and cannot provide legally. If I didn't find loopholes even for myself as a woman of color to try to navigate, then I wouldn't be where I am. Many of us wouldn't be where we are. And that same approach has been taken in my work and in my service to serving undocumented students. I have been always an advocate of students providing everything possible to maximize their opportunities, their success, whatever it is that the journey they're on, and you know, from my perspective it's always been not an issue of race or gender or legal status. It's just always been an issue of supporting whomever comes through our doors holistically and doing everything possible to make sure that they are successful.

grievance is the lack of institutional support for the practitioners doing this work, which the institutional leaders communicate when they ask, “Is [serving undocumented students] your job?” Although not always said explicitly, these grievances suggest a belief that higher education, and community colleges specifically, should not be spaces where undocumented students are experiencing these struggles. Undocumented students should not be receiving misinformation, should be able to afford community college, should feel like they belong, and should feel safe disclosing their status to institutional agents.

On the organizational side of the coin is the idea that practitioners believe colleges should support practitioners’ ability to support undocumented students formally. Along these lines, Ana stated, "As we should with all students, we should be providing them with what they need.” When I asked the participants my closing question concerning whether there was a type of support that undocumented students needed but were still not receiving. They listed the very things that would correct their grievances, including financial support (n=24), a physical on-campus space (n=8), and mental health services (n=9).

4.4 Emotional Labor as By-Product of Misalignment

Eleven participants explicitly mentioned the emotional toll that comes from the dissonance of working within a context that does not address undocumented student issues. The emotions ranged from sadness or disappointment to anger and burnout. Alicia spoke about the emotional labor that comes from feeling like the college was not giving her the ability to help an undocumented student, “I feel there's one time this semester where I was almost in tears because I'm like, how do I help this student?” This was due to the misalignment between feeling like she knew how to help and should help but not being able to because of the limitations of her role. The institution valued something different.

When Denise received a position as a director at a new community college that she felt aligned more with her values, she realized just how difficult it was to support undocumented students at her prior institution. She reported, “I just felt like really angry, like, ‘Oh my gosh, we’re being cheated.’” Her previous institution was near her home, where she felt a deep connection. Leaving the institution nearest to her home also contributed to additional dissonance. She added, “I just cheated out my community, you know, I just left.” This feeling was part of her motivation to continue working.

While the emotional labor of that misalignment in values motivated some, others described a negative effect on their ability to continue to act in support. For example, Alma recounted, “I’m starting to feel burnt out. For sure. This summer I’m starting to feel the effect of all the overtime, you know the ‘overtime,’ [uses air quotes] the ‘free’ [in air quotes] work that I was putting last semester. I haven’t been able to catch a break.” Alma was tired and felt she could not do the work with undocumented students she was passionate about because she was wearing so many hats, trying to provide as much as possible with very little support.

Similarly, Hector also talked about experiencing burnout and its effects as a faculty member at his community college. “I'm a Latino queer, man. Sometimes, speaking in public spaces is hard enough for me because of imposter syndrome. It's just these layers add up to each other. Advocacy becomes real burnout. That burnout affects your ability to speak.” Hector points specifically to that misalignment between his identity and the public spaces within his community college and how it affects his choice to speak and advocate for undocumented students. From these practitioners, all holding different roles in different community colleges, it is unclear why emotional labor motivated some and tempered others. However, this emotional

labor is integral to an individual practitioner's experience with changing organizations for undocumented student support.

4.5 Summary of Chapter Four

In this chapter, we find that practitioners' personal, social, and professional identities motivate actions to support undocumented students by highlighting grievances and deprivations they are trying to address. Identities also give insight into what practitioners value and prioritize for undocumented student success and what they perceive the college still needs. We also posit that emotional labor results from the misalignment between practitioners' identities, community college norms, and practices and how it motivates and tempers action.

This chapter explores what may have first motivated practitioners to support undocumented students. However, as Meyerson's Action Cycle delineates, the self is in constant relationship with others in the organization and embedded in a context for action that either presents further opportunities for action or constrains that action. The following chapter explores practitioners' actions to reconcile the misalignment in their values.

Chapter 5 Actions and Tactics

Once practitioners decide they cannot live with the alternatives of not acting to align the institutions' values with their own, the only option is to take action. Practitioners' actions in this study reflect the methods they choose to meet their goal of creating change for undocumented students at their community college, that is, the tactics they employ through those actions to try and institutionalize change in support of undocumented students. In this chapter, I adapt Meyerson's spectrum of strategies to categorize further the actions taken by practitioners in this study as tactics toward change.

5.1 Defining Strategies and Tactics

Strategies and tactics are two terms used across disciplines and topics concerning the implementation of change. My two primary sources using the tempered radicals framework used the terms interchangeably. I previously introduced Meyerson's spectrum of strategies, which ranged from "resisting quietly and staying true to one's self" on the left–the most limited in the intent of impact and scope of impact–followed by "turning personal threats into opportunities," "broadening the impact through negotiation," "leveraging small wins," and "organizing collective action," (2003, p. 8) the largest in the intent of impact and scope of impact in Meyerson's view. Although Meyerson explores actions within these categories, Meyerson never delineates between strategies and tactics, which Kezar and Lester attempted in applying the framework to social change in higher education.

Kezar and Lester (2011) assumed definitions of strategies and tactics from the literature on grassroots leadership. Strategy, they posited, is "an overarching principle that is applied to

various tactics to achieve a goal" (p. 41). The examples they offered were "flexibility, confrontation, or a pragmatic focus" (p. 41). Conversely, tactics are "specific methods for achieving goals" (p. 41). Examples were "consciousness raising, empowerment, relationship building, organizing, and participating in marches." (p. 41). These definitions are consistent with other definitions of strategies and tactics in social movements. Snow and Soule (2010) defined strategy as "a broad, organizing plan for accomplishing or attaining a particular goal" (p. 166). Tactics "are a reflection of strategies in that they are the specific actions or techniques through which strategies are implemented" (Snow & Soule, 2010, p. 166).

Kezar and Lester's (2011) application of these definitions was not always clear. They identified two strategies: a tempered approach and an educational strategy. They then deemed Meyerson's "spectrum of strategies" tactics. Their analysis did not use these tactics, noting, "while faculty and staff certainly operated behind the scenes, fewer described self-expression, turning threats into opportunities, negotiation, or collective action" (p. 99). Kezar and Lester found alternative tactics they believed were more relevant, such as, "vision, raising consciousness, creating networks/empowering others/relationship building, and garnering resources" (p. 100). They also noted how educational institutions tempered each tactic. Without practitioners' explicit indications of long-term strategies, I focus on tactics in these findings and categorize tactics into categories that I adapted from Meyerson's spectrum of strategies. I renamed these strategies "tactical categories" because they reflected shorter-term goals that potentially contribute to larger strategic planning and goals.

5.2 Adapting the Spectrum of Strategies

I first used Meyerson's spectrum of strategies as a starting point to understand where various tactics fell on a spectrum of intent of impact and scope of impact scale. Although the

categories I identified as tactics and strategies did not reflect the categories in Meyerson's spectrum, I believed they could be adapted to fit the community college context and the topic of undocumented student change. The following section uses the spectrum of strategies to organize the tactics used by the practitioners. In this way, I could still identify which tactics were more tempered and which were the least. Figure 3 shows Meyerson's original categories and the categories I ultimately landed on based on my interviews. The left-most tactic category of resisting quietly and staying true to oneself stayed the same. The tactics under this category intended to create change on a small scope, usually in one-on-one settings. Furthermore, practitioners using tactics in this category did not intend to change large-scale organizational structures, practices, or policies. This tactic category remains unchanged even in the context of community colleges. It continued to be easiest for practitioners to work alone on a small,

Figure 3

New Spectrum of Tactic Categories, Adapted from Spectrum of Strategies (Meyerson 2003)

Original (Meyerson 2003)	Resisting quietly and staying true to one's self	Turning personal threats into opportunities	Broadening the impact through negotiation	Leveraging small wins	Organizing collective action
Adapted	Resisting quietly and staying true to one's self	Leveraging higher education norms	Expanding and sustaining visibility	Targeting doable organizational changes	Organizing collective action

supportive action for undocumented students.

Meyerson's second tactic category was turning personal threats into opportunities. Most practitioners in this study did not mention feeling personally threatened in an interpersonal setting. Some undocumented practitioners said the lack of support or political environment felt personal. However, this feeling could not always be traced to one person within the community

college setting. Instead of “personal threats”, the practitioners in this study more often experienced general resistance to change. What might be a more tempered response that mirrors turning the opposition into opportunities? Considering the practitioners' observations, I concluded that there are opportunities in the community college’s organizational norms, such as the already generally accepted practices, policies, and structures. When a response to opposition to undocumented student support mirrors accepted higher education norms, it is more likely to be received positively.

The third Meyerson tactic was “broadening impact through negotiation.” For the practitioners in this study, negotiation was not a common tactic. The practitioners, instead, broadened their impact by expanding and sustaining visibility for undocumented student support. This tactic falls nicely between the smallest and largest intended scope of impact because expanding visibility can still be done with a few people but is meant to produce broader change and cannot be done quietly. Methods of expanding visibility still fell within accepted norms (material and symbolic) in higher education.

Meyerson’s fourth tactic, “leveraging small wins,” received criticism in for being “more of a principle or concept across all the tactics rather than a tactic in itself” (Kezar & Lester, 2011, p. 99). There is merit in this critique because success with any of the strategies and tactics across the spectrum, however small, could be considered a small win. In her chapter on leveraging small wins, Meyerson explains how these small wins can add up to something with a more considerable impact rather than trying to solve one big problem with one big solution. However, revisiting the examples Meyerson provides for this strategy suggests substantive differences may set these “wins” apart from others. These examples included instituting an informal recruitment policy targeting minority candidates and asking minority candidates to commit to hiring minority

candidates themselves; moving a work group to report directly to the director of a division that she needed approval from (after working separately); and placing a green bin under everyone's desk so they do not have to get up and walk to the receptacle. Each of these examples points to a substantive change in the norms of an organization. The first was a change in practice, the second a change to the organizational reporting structure, and the third to the work environment. These small changes led to more extensive changes because they affected how people worked or interacted in the organization. Thus, I explained this strategy as "targeting doable organizational changes."

"Organizing collective action" was Meyerson's tactic with the broadest intent for impact and scope of impact. For the practitioners in this study, organizing collective action was also a less-tempered way of creating change. However, organizing within the community college was still tempered because the power of the collective was informal, unclear, or reduced to a smaller area of impact. Tactics in this category were the least tempered, which meant engaging in a movement outside the organization, meaning the community college had less control over tempering actions here. I organized specific tactics under each tactic category in the sections below, as seen in Table 4.

Table 4

Practitioners' Tactics: Categorized from Most to Least Tempered

Tempered Spectrum	Tactical Categories	Tactics
Most Tempered	Resisting quietly	• Identifying and leveraging allies • One-on-one support for undocumented students
	Leveraging organization al norms	• Staying in one's lane and leveraging it • Leveraging "free time • Leveraging other community colleges

	Expanding and sustaining visibility	● Selling undocumented student support ○ Continuous advocacy ○ Showing the numbers ○ Undocumented student voices and narratives ● Educating the community ○ Questioning ○ Training
	Targeting doable organization al changes	● Changing data systems and practices ● Searching for new funding opportunities and resources ● Creating systems for existing policy ●Hiring
Least Tempered	Organizing collective action	● Building professional work groups ●Off-campus organizing and partnerships ●Changing legislation

5.2.1 Resisting Quietly and Staying True to One's Self

Many practitioners in the study found it the easiest to support undocumented students in ways that did not involve others, would not ruffle any feathers, and would still allow them to feel they were making a difference for undocumented students. Practitioners often took on projects alone as part of their formal duties. Practitioners also mentioned the small acts of other trusted allies that made a difference in their ability to continue supporting undocumented students. Although these acts may have made a big difference in the lives of the undocumented students who received support from these practitioners, the tactics in line with the resisting quietly tactic were not intended to lead to significant institutional change for undocumented students.

One-on-one Student Support. The first, most tempered tactic practitioners could use was offering support to undocumented students one-on-one. Whether this was a part of their formal position or taking time outside of their formal or compensated hours, practitioners could connect with one or a few undocumented students without calling attention to their actions. For

example, Bernardo was a counselor who was already seeing undocumented students in the EOPS program, so he found it easy to open up spots for non-EOPS students and continue to do his counseling job without raising any alarms: “I started seeing students who were in EOPS who were undocumented, but also opening that up to non-EOPS students.”

Practitioners could make quiet yet instrumental changes to the undocumented student experience at their community colleges in these one-on-one interactions. Elsa provided an example of this type of change. In her previous position in financial aid, she was not required to do anything specifically for undocumented students. However, to stay true to her identity as an ally for undocumented students, she would gather informal feedback when she met with them to ensure that general financial aid materials included information relevant to their immigration status.

> I would ask [undocumented students], “Can I use your opinion or your record just to check what happens?” And we would get a lot of feedback from students willing to share. They would say, “When you said ‘bring taxes to the workshop,’ in this email, my parents don't have taxes, so I didn't go to your workshop.” And things like that. So, the next semester, I would change it to “If your parents file taxes, please bring a copy of the taxes with you if they don't file taxes, please ask your parents for an estimate of the cash earnings for the year.” Little things like that.

This small and quiet change due to Elsa’s extra effort could lead to significant change in the experience of undocumented students who might now feel that the workshops were also for them.

Working with students one-on-one like this was a tactic reflecting the most tempered strategy. Although this was not the only strategy practitioners engaged in, it was the fallback

when less-tempered strategies became difficult. For example, Alicia (counselor) noted, “Sometimes, if I feel defeated, I just take a step back. I know the [undocumented] students are coming to me anyway. I'm helping them. I just keep going. I just have to keep working and serving the students.” This tactic of working with undocumented students one-on-one was effective for the students who were fortunate enough to find these individuals. However, this tactic was a band-aid for larger systemic issues to undocumented student access and success. This tactic alone did not result in widespread changes to the institution because it operated under status quo organizational norms.

Identifying and Leveraging Allies. The practitioners indicated that they leveraged relationships with trusted allies to share the labor of undocumented student support and institutional change. These actions reflected a more tempered strategy because they were usually informal one-on-one interactions with a single or small group of allies that were not visible to the organization.

Mayra, and administrator at her college describes one example of these informal actions between allies. She described getting phone calls from allies asking for advice and the support they would give each other:

> She may call and say, “Hey, I’m thinking of this. Do you think that can work? If I put this proposal together, what problems do you see with it? Like what populations would benefit from something like this?”... It is informal, more like, “Hey, come over for some wine.”

Carlos described a similar situation at a different institution and district. He also mentioned his informal communication with an ally at the district: “When it comes to, like, ‘I need to text someone about this.” [laughs] It’s a colleague from the district who has a kind of

similar role as me." He continued, "I've become close to her in terms of asking, 'hey, what about this? What about that? Hey, we need to do this, we need to do that.' Or, 'how are you over there? This is what we are struggling with over here.'" Carlos also mentioned another ally whom he appreciated for being able to provide "edits to the way that we present things, the way that we are reaching out to our students." Only three people rose to the top of Carlos's list of truly trusted "brainstorming partners." These allies shared advice, emotional support, and the labor of supporting undocumented students.

At the level of the counselor or other student services staff like Alicia, allies were important to ensure undocumented student issues were resolved in a timely manner. Alicia noted, "I tried to build a strong ally in the person who would clear residency. We work together. I say, "Hey, I have this student. They just submitted their paperwork, but their transcripts are not in. Can you keep an eye on it?" This is how Alicia ensured that the student she was working with received the support she needed and that the student would not find barriers once she referred them to the next area.

For many, building a network of allies was an informal process under the organization's radar. In Chapter Four, I mentioned that Carmen had received the message from her leadership that serving undocumented students was not her job, meaning she was taking time outside her formal duties. However, she was able to do more when she found allies who were already taking action elsewhere in the college. She had heard what a faculty and another administrator had done to support undocumented students. The faculty member and administrator had, in turn, learned about what she was doing. Merging their work allowed them to expand their support for undocumented students and form professional relationships and friendships.

Brenda was a director and felt it was easy to identify allies because they shared a racial identity (e.g., Latina or Latino) or expressed having identities that made them care about social justice issues, even when they were not undocumented. She noted, "I think what most of the allies share is that they look like me, Latina or Latino. We are fortunate that I could easily identify allies and allies in power who do not share the undocumented student experience, but they share the common goals." It is important to note that Brenda was in a position where she had access to allies in powerful decision-making positions at her college. Mayra was in a similar situation at her college. She shared one way to identify allies when they were most needed. She noted, "If [an undocumented student] is having a hard time and they need some kind of special funds, you can kind of make a call out, and you will know who the allies are based on their response." Even if allies did not come about frequently, identifying allies was intuitive and did not require excessive labor. Therefore, identifying and leveraging allies was a low-risk tactic and fit well with a more tempered strategy.

5.2.2 Leveraging Higher Education Norms

Leveraging higher education norms follows resisting quietly because practitioners could still use this tactic alone or with a few others. The tactics within this tactic category are unlikely to provoke organizational ire because they fall within generally accepted and formal roles, practices, and policies. However, given that these actions are already known and generally accepted, they are also unlikely to change the status quo drastically or within a short time frame.

Staying in One's Lane and Leveraging It. Individuals' roles in an organization come with different access to organizational spaces, knowledge, resources, and power. Several practitioners mentioned how their role specifically positioned them to take advantage of resources or decision-making abilities. For example, Daniel mentioned his administrative role

placed him in several meetings with executive leadership at his community college where he could suggest actions related to undocumented students: “I plant those seeds at these different meetings, I feel like that’s why, they’re thinking about [undocumented student support] proactively rather than reactively.” Daniel’s seat at the table in rooms where leaders were making decisions allowed him to include the undocumented student's perspective in those decisions.

Depending on a practitioner's position or role in the institution, they could have the power to exploit loopholes in existing policies or structures to support undocumented students without having to engage too many others in the change. Mayra provided an example of this tactic.

> During that time, undocumented students couldn’t be employed. But they could be in a club, and maybe we could provide a meal for some faculty event or provide some kind of service for a club. [paused] So that’s how we generated funds. We used those funds amongst the club members to support them with books or transportation. We used every way possible to find a way to give them access to those tools, even if it meant utilizing the club structure.

In her leadership role, Mayra could control the allocation of funds to student clubs. This ability meant she did not have to involve too many others in the change. Another important note here is that this loophole did not require any changes to how many practitioners did their daily jobs. Again, it did not significantly change the structure of the institution. Therefore, it did not call for too much unwanted organizational attention. However, it was an effective tactic in providing a new way for undocumented students to access resources they could not previously access.

While staying in one’s lane could bring about change, there were limitations to its effectiveness. For example, Ana did not feel ready to push any boundaries in her role yet, noting

she was still learning. “Part of it was a pick your battles type of thing… let’s not like ruffle feathers on that, and unfortunately, in institutions, there’s that limitation of the politics, and I’m still learning.” Ana relied on her job description when taking action for undocumented students. Thus, it was easier for practitioners to use their roles for change when they had more organizational decision-making power.

Leveraging “Free” Time. Some practitioners' formal roles did not position them to support undocumented students in their day-to-day work. Some practitioners had to make time outside their roles to stay true to their identities. When practitioners believed there was a gap in support for undocumented students that they could fill, these practitioners supported undocumented students programmatically outside of work hours. Ten practitioners mentioned that undocumented student support was often a volunteer activity done without compensation and often after or outside work hours. This work was more visible than the quiet one-on-one support. So, these practitioners exploited what they perceived as a loophole; if practitioners could get their formal job done, it was more difficult for their supervisors or the broader community college community to say they could not support undocumented students.

For example, Alicia’s counseling role did not allow her to open additional appointment times for undocumented students. Undocumented students would, therefore, often have to wait about two weeks for another counseling appointment. This was an issue because undocumented students’ issues often needed immediate attention if they were to access financial aid in time to enroll in and pay for classes. However, Alicia was not going to act against the explicit rules of her job as communicated by her superiors: “We have gotten communication that you are not to change your schedule. It is the way it is. I would not want to be a rebel and be like, ‘Well, I am going to change it up.’” Alicia, therefore, saw undocumented students outside her established

counseling hours, like during lunch or after work, when their situations required immediate attention. She saw undocumented students one-on-one during her "time off" so as not to draw attention or receive pushback.

Cynthia also chose to do "extra work" outside of her job as a student services staff despite believing the work leaders at her community college did not recognize her efforts. She recounted, "I was just giving extra time to design the flyer, send emails, post on social media…It's extra work. It's not like it's part of your job."

Carmen and Elsa were practitioners at the same institution who had to do work outside their formal workday. Carmen helped plan workshops for undocumented students outside of her formal leadership role. She noted the following about doing this work: "I had a lot of guilt around [staying at the office until midnight] because it meant I left my kids or husband alone. But it was the only way to keep up with my work so I could do the [undocumented student] work." Leadership questioned Carmen whether these programs for undocumented students were part of her job. To quell future questions, she would work on programs and resources for undocumented students after finishing her formal duties. This tactic was not always viable for practitioners. Campus leadership also questioned Elsa's work outside of her work hours. Her situation was different than Carmen's, who had a salaried job. Because Elsa's position fell under union work policies that required compensating overtime work, Elsa eventually had to give up some programmatic work for undocumented students.

Leveraging Other Community Colleges. Five participants explicitly mentioned leveraging what other well-respected community colleges were doing to push their institutions to adopt the same or similar support for undocumented students. April was a new staff member hired to serve undocumented students on her campus. Her campus was located in a more

conservative area and enrolled fewer undocumented students than other colleges in her district. Before she started her position, her campus had no formal services for undocumented students. April's supervisor had given her much flexibility but little direction on starting services on her campus. Therefore, she leveraged the work of other community colleges by using them as a resource for starting support services on her campus. She said:

> I visited our sister school in [a nearby city]. I reached out to people at [this] community college and [this] community college. I reached out in every direction and spoke to those who are allies, representatives, counselors, and all kinds of people who are helping undocumented students just to get a little bit more information.

April mentioned asking these practitioners, "How did you start? Where do I start my program? How can I get it up and running?" April found these relationships with nearby colleges helpful because she could apply what they had already done to her college.

Other practitioners used the institutionalized support at other campuses to garner support at their institution. Alma noted that when they saw institutionalized support for undocumented students at other campuses, they would go to leadership and say, "'These campuses are doing it. Why aren't we?', 'Other campuses have this. Why can't we have this?' So that has gotten a lot of buy-in." Alma explained that she used this tactic to start a fellowship program for undocumented students, which compensated them for attending workshops on their campus. Two other practitioners also noted the need to reference using this tactic with their respective colleges.

5.2.3 Expanding & Sustaining Visibility

Expanding and sustaining visibility for undocumented student support was a popular strategy engaged by the practitioners in this study. Providing visibility to the undocumented student cause required more than quiet resistance. Creating visibility for undocumented student

support required practitioners to be vocal and more conspicuous to other individuals within the organization. The tactics within this strategy were still tempered in that they usually fell within accepted ways of communicating in educational settings. However, practitioners had a larger intended scope of impact with these tactics than the two prior strategies because the tactics pushed for institutionalizing practices or policies that did not yet exist at the colleges.

Selling undocumented student support. Issue selling is a concept researched most in the literature on organizational management (See Dutton & Ashford, 1993; Dutton, Ashford, O'Neill, & Lawrence, 2001; Mayer, Ong, Sonenshein, & Ashford, 2019). It suggests that members of an organization can achieve strategic change by gaining top-level managers' time and attention–a limited resource. In this case, practitioners need to make the case that undocumented students deserve a portion of the limited resources for support. There are many categories of issue selling, including attending to packaging, involvement, and process (Dutton et al., 2001) and thinking about the efficacy of moral and economic language to sell an issue (Mayer et al., 2019). Here, I explore major tactics to sell the issue of undocumented student support to the leaders and decision-makers at the practitioners' community colleges.

Continuous advocacy. Bringing visibility to undocumented students' issues required ongoing actions from practitioners. One effort to educate or propose a change would not help leadership prioritize and sustain change for undocumented student issues. Eight practitioners specifically talked about the need for continuous advocacy. For example, Denise (director) illustrated why continuous advocacy was necessary despite being at a college that she described as clearly supportive of undocumented students: "Not that [the vice president] doesn't want to be part of [the undocumented student work], because she is. But she has so many things going on." Denise adopted the tactic of "staying on her radar" to ensure undocumented students remained at

the top of competing priorities for her vice president. There was a constant process of communicating, educating, and asking so that the needs of undocumented students would not get lost in the noise of the community college.

Carlos offered another example. When I asked him about his process of starting a professional work group, his answer reflected the continuous advocacy tactic.

> There really isn't a formal process. Honestly, I think the process was just continuous– for lack of a better word– *nagging* from those of us who were doing the work. At each point, just going and asking the vice president or asking a certain committee for funding.

In the context of competing priorities, when the need for change was clear and the means to make a change existed, continuous advocacy became a helpful tool to ensure there was follow-through. It was necessary, even if it meant being perceived as a nuisance to the leadership.

As a director, Jennifer was the recipient of this tactic and recognized the persistence of her staff member in keeping her attention on undocumented student issues:

> [My staff member] brings these to my attention… I don't want to say she continues to push, but she does. She says, "This is why we need this; this is what's happening." Having her on the frontline, working with the students, she is bringing it to my attention so we can push it forward.

Jennifer noted that even if she could do it independently, her staff member's constant reminders of the undocumented student voice and the ongoing need were valuable resources. These reminders kept her attention on the next steps of change for undocumented students in the face of other competing priorities.

Showing the numbers. One way of gaining leaders' attention is by telling a story about undocumented students through data. Many decisions made in college contexts are now data-

driven. Kezar noted that grassroots leaders, particularly in research institutions, leveraged gathering data as a strategy to support change (Kezar & Lester, 2011). Many practitioners I spoke to were aware of the data's power to tell a story of undocumented student needs. The fact that twenty practitioners mentioned data speaks to its importance in support and change for undocumented students at community colleges. However, unlike collecting data for most student populations, undocumented student status creates many data challenges. The biggest challenge is the fear of disclosing an undocumented status and keeping undocumented statuses private. AB 540 requires some documentation that can be tracked, but this is an imperfect number because many undocumented individuals do not qualify for AB 540. There are also documented individuals who qualify for AB 540 status. However, it is general knowledge that the number of AB540 students is an underrepresentation, not an overrepresentation, of the undocumented student population at a college. Still, practitioners found ways to use data to bring visibility to the issue.

Practitioners found novel, albeit less formal or structured, ways of collecting data to bring visibility to the issue of undocumented student support. Martin is a student services staff member with formal duties for serving undocumented students. He talked about these data struggles, "there isn't much data on who is undocumented, especially because we need to protect their identities." He turned to more internal ways of keeping track of the undocumented students they served:

> We have an internal metrics sheet where we list out every person that I, my counselor, and my campus aides serve and reach. Every time we go to a tabling, every time we meet with someone one-on-one, every time that we are doing an event specifically for our

community, we are jotting it down. We are using all that feedback and those numbers to prove to our program manager and our institution why we should be here.

Martin also created a survey for undocumented students and adopted a message on their website about how student information is protected through (FERPA) to help ease fears of disclosing immigration status. These are novel ways of telling the undocumented student story.

In turn, Elsa used the numbers to ask questions about equitably serving different student groups:

> I started advocating that we need a space, we need a DREAM program. I would say things like, "Other programs like EOPS, Adelante program, and Black students program have close to 700-800 students as a program, and they have a space. Whereas we have 900 DREAMers, and there's no space."

Elsa found using data to raise questions to be effective. Her community college was in the process of opening a center that would house multiple programs, including the staff from the undocumented student program on their campus. These numbers helped make the case that the space was necessary.

The data was also vital to making the business case for supporting undocumented students and ensuring the community college captured the funds they would receive as part of their full-time enrollment. Elsa continued, "I like to put on the administrator hat to have these conversations with administrators and say, 'We'll lose money. For every DREAMer we're losing, it's an FTE that we're losing. It's money that you're losing for next year's budget.'" Another practitioner made a similar case, noting the data illustrating the shifting demographics of the area and the role it would have on enrollment. In this way, these practitioners tied undocumented student issues to community college priorities.

***Undocumented student voices and narratives*.** Although the data was an important part of making the case for more services and institutionalizing changes, it was not always the preferred method of selling undocumented student support. I noted how Elsa used data to make a case for a USRC, but she also talked about the need for narratives: “I would go in with the data, and this is how much money we get; all these numbers. But always in the back of my mind, I felt like, ‘How do I quantify the students' narratives, which also matter.” Elsa was among the practitioners who discussed using undocumented student narratives of success and struggle to push for change.

Daniel discussed an event his college hosted that focused on institutionalizing USRCs and their services. They placed undocumented students at the forefront of the event. He noted, “We had an [undocumented student] panel, and they shared their stories. They shared their connection with our services and what they experienced.” Carlos held an administrative role similar to Daniel's in his institution. He used the same tactic of hosting a panel of undocumented students at a training session for the admissions office. The students shared their negative experiences with the admissions processes and staff. He spoke about the impact of that panel on the admissions practitioners in the room. “While it was hard for that admissions office to hear the discrimination that [undocumented students] faced at their front counter, you need to hear that for change to happen, right?” He continued, “The dean of that area needed to hear that that was happening in his area to say, ‘Okay, this needs to change.’” In this case, Carlos tailored undocumented students' narratives to the audience and the leadership that could decide how to change practice.

Alicia spoke about the role of students' voices in a proposal they wrote to change a residency fee policy.

> We actually had our students write statements to our board of trustees so that we could put them in the proposal. I thought that if they heard it from the students, that would be best. We had them write testimonials of their situation, who they are, and how this new change would benefit them. They did tell us that was very helpful.

Alicia knew these narratives gave the board members helpful context to inform proposed changes. It was difficult for leadership to reject the stories of undocumented students. In these ways and more, student narratives were critical to understanding the issues and bringing these issues to the attention of those with the power to make changes.

Educating the community. Practitioners did not always target leadership or key decision-makers. Many practitioners and outside community members also have the opportunity to contribute to positive undocumented student experiences. Previous studies have identified the importance of fostering a recognition and understanding of undocumented students and their issues, challenges, and needs (Cisneros & Cadenas, 2017; Suarez-Orozco et al., 2015). Below, we explore two ways that practitioners in this study educated the college and local communities.

Questioning. One tactic practitioners used to expand the visibility of undocumented student issues for staff or faculty was questioning current practices. April described this tactic, "What I have done so far is raised questions…We don't train [departments]. We ask the questions to see if we are covering ourselves and helping [undocumented students] in X, Y, and Z [situations]." April went on to provide more context for this tactic. She described a process of asking a department questions like, "How are you providing this service to our students?" When practitioners respond with how they serve the general student population, she probes deeper. "I understand that's the general public. How are you servicing those who don't have particular resources already available to them?" April then presented a recent scenario of an undocumented

student who came in with a question about whether they could work on campus. She added, “There are ways we can help the student, but does the financial aid office know how to answer that question?”

Questions can hold people accountable for otherwise invisible or unquestioned events. Alicia was a member of an outside organization for undocumented student success that noticed quick turnover in one of the USRC coordinator positions for one of the local member community colleges. This prompted them to ask questions of the college: “What are you doing? Something is happening at your college. Why aren’t you retaining your [USRC] coordinators? Why is the turnover so high for both roles?” These questions bring visibility to the issue of undocumented student change. Community college leaders might take these events for granted without this questioning.

Training. Nineteen participants mentioned engaging in (or being in the process of creating) some training for community college practitioners. These trainings had varying formats, timelines, and intended audiences. Examples of training formats included panels, facilitated workshops, or speaker presentations. Participants mentioned trainings that were one-off and routine; at least one practitioner offered training during mandatory yearly professional development days, while others offered once a semester or every October during an annual undocumented student action week for community colleges in California. The target audiences also vary. Some trainings were open to anyone interested. Other trainings were targeted only to specific departments (e.g., counseling, financial aid departments) or task forces. One participant created a training for student allies who were not undocumented but wanted to support undocumented students.

Ten of the participants noted creating an “UndocuAlly training.” UndocuAlly training is generally considered professional development to inform higher education practitioners about undocumented student issues. Practitioners who complete this training usually display an indication that they are UndocuAlly trained (e.g., a monarch butterfly or an UndocuAlly sign) to signal to undocumented students that they are safe individuals with which to disclose their status and that they have some knowledge about their specific needs.

Carmen gave one example of how creating an UndocuAlly training with three other practitioners helped spread visibility about undocumented students: “Now we have 250 people trained on being an ally to the undocumented community. And those allies then help to funnel out information like fliers or send an email to students like, ‘We're going to have a DACA renewal.’” In this case, Carmen is pointing out the expectation that allies will play a role in expanding the visibility of undocumented student support.

Ana was a student services staff member at a college in a more conservative district. She relayed a story about how the undocumented student club initially trained faculty and staff on undocumented student issues. Without institutional training, students had taken it upon themselves to educate the faculty and staff with whom they interacted. Ana talked about opening the USRC and being able to move that training into the USRC’s services. “We morphed the faculty and staff training into an UndocuAlly training through the center that we provide for faculty during flex week.” Moving the trainings under the responsibility of the USRC allowed them to formalize these trainings and connect them to other existing institutional processes for educating community college practitioners.

5.2.4 Targeting Doable Changes to Organizational Norms

Practitioners who cared about undocumented student issues actively searched for opportunities to make meaningful changes. Sometimes, practitioners had the opportunity to modify practices, structures, or the work environment that substantially changed how their community college worked. These changes felt "doable," usually because they involved quiet actions that did not attract attention. However, these actions could not remain quiet for long because they *were* consequential in supporting undocumented student success. Finding these opportunities and being willing to take on this less-tempered strategy may be more difficult. As such, practitioners had fewer examples of actions that fell within this strategy. However, the practitioners' tactics that did fall within this strategy are rich examples of how these tempered radicals are changing their community colleges.

Creating new processes for existing policies. Policies passed at the state or federal level affecting undocumented students at community colleges give a directive but not the blueprints for realizing the policy's goals. Policy implementation is often up to the community colleges, and there is little support for implementing policy or accountability for how implementation occurs. Here I provide examples of how practitioners engaged in tempered radicalism to change structures and practices at the community colleges to align with state policy.

Brenda (director) provided a powerful example of how she intervened to implement policy at her community college. She had particular knowledge of the California state education code and a loophole to potentially waive fees for undocumented students who were not eligible for DACA or AB540. She noted, "Ed Code says that a community college can waive the fees of the undocumented person who has a financial need–It's not a *shall* [emphasis added], it's a *they may* [emphasis added]." This language meant that colleges had a choice on whether or not to use this policy to waive fees for undocumented students who were not eligible for other fee waivers.

Brenda believed her college would not adopt the policy unless the admission office leadership knew they could account for the policy in their auditing. She disclosed:

> The Senate Bill gave us some wiggle room to create the documentation we could use for this scenario or that scenario. So now, how do we move undocumented students into the college for free, which is antithetical to what's been practiced? That relationship of really sitting down with that admissions director and her saying, “Okay, I know what the state says I have to have coupled with this bill. This is what we need to do to build the pathway to make sure that the student is safe, first and foremost, and that the college is covered; it's actually a local decision.”

Brenda’s actions to meet with the admissions director and provide the documentation and processes to implement this policy led to a different way of practicing admissions and financial aid for undocumented students. What was previously “antithetical” was then possible. Brenda relayed the result of those actions, “Once we knew we could cover the college, we took it a step further to our leadership, and our leadership said, ‘Absolutely, waive all fees.’ That waiver refers to the $46 per unit. But our college said, ‘Not only are we going to approve that, we're going to approve any fee; they pay nothing.’” Many California community colleges are still not taking advantage of this policy to waive fees for undocumented students who are not eligible for other waivers. It is up to each college and the practitioners there to advocate for exploiting this loophole.

Two practitioners mentioned changing data coding systems to align with a new policy. As I have already mentioned, there are significant challenges to keeping track of the undocumented student population as they navigate institutional support systems. Simultaneously, there is a critical need to identify undocumented students and guide them through their

population's very particular matriculation processes. Not flagging undocumented students can lead to dire consequences (such as wrongfully filling out the Free Application for Student Federal Aid (FAFSA) or being wrongfully billed for thousands of dollars of tuition payments). These consequences can place a student's retention and success at the community college and beyond at risk. That is why a small change to data systems and practices has the potential to make such a substantial impact on undocumented student experiences.

Elsa was a financial aid staff member when she changed the data systems at her college. Over several years at her current and previous institution, Elsa used data software to more accurately flag undocumented students to receive the financial aid to which they were entitled. Elsa was trained at a prior institution to use a software system to flag students who qualified for FAFSA to ensure their fees were waived. However, she noticed that the system did not flag undocumented students, who were also eligible for fee waivers from the state. Elsa saw this as a gap: "The [California DREAM Act] law was there, but the software wasn't ready to implement or enforce this legislation."

When she moved to a new institution, they had the same issue. Practitioners did not have the support to implement the software, and no one had taken the initiative to ask questions about gaps in the software. Elsa worked with another new employee in the information technology (IT) department to run reports to catch undocumented students who were inappropriately categorized in the system so that the financial aid office could waive their fees to ensure eligibility for the Cal Grant. This California-specific financial aid allocation had recently been made available to DREAMERs. She explained, "So we would run reports to get the students that fit [the Cal Grant's] specific criteria: Like they have a DREAM application, but they're considered out of state with admissions, and this is their first semester at [this college]. So most likely [the

undocumented students] don't know what [AB 540] is." Because financial aid and admissions data systems were connected, Elsa and her colleague in IT easily found these gaps by running these reports. This connection between the data systems allowed them to create messages that automatically went to undocumented students missing particular information to be eligible for their fee waiver and the Cal Grant:

> We would send them an email saying, "You did this. This is what AB 540 means. You are eligible for a fee waiver; please click on this link and submit it to admissions in person." We did that for all these different types of cases. For students who were rejected because of wrong parent information, we would even send like, "Your application is rejected, no parents signature, please go…" and then we had a link there. We have workshops to help you with this particular problem. You can make an appointment with a particular person or counselor because you're selected for verification and we want you to complete the process to get the Cal Grant.

Flagging students in the system and sending them automatic follow-up communication to resolve student issues was a relatively quiet change by Elsa and the IT employee. Elsa noted, "Normally, an IT person wouldn't take on this project without getting it cleared by all the supervisors." Yet, these practitioners worked for two years with little supervision or resistance. The result was a massive change in how financial aid and admissions offices interacted with undocumented students through this automated system and a massive increase in the number of undocumented students taking advantage of the Cal grant they were eligible for because of AB540.

One particular update to a coding rule based on feedback and the experience of one undocumented student "increased students who were eligible for Cal Grant so much," Elsa stated, "that the State of California came to audit our financial aid office the following year."

Once her work on the data system became visible, it became more difficult and was met with resistance by college leaders.

Implementing new structures and processes for sustainability. Ensuring the sustainability of undocumented student support required an active search for opportunities to change institutional processes. One example is strategically connecting undocumented student programs or USRCs with more sustainable programs with stable funding streams. Twelve practitioners mentioned some connection of their undocumented student support programs with Extended Opportunity Programs and Services (EOPS). EOPS is a regularly funded state program that can provide support services like tutoring and counseling to eligible undocumented students. Twelve practitioners mentioned working with EOPS to provide services to all undocumented students (even if they were not in the EOPS program). However, Xiomara relayed how they took additional steps to intentionally place their USRC within EOPS to benefit from this sustained funding and provide existing services to those not eligible for EOPS:

> At first, [the USRC] didn't belong to anything. We tried to put it under the school governance, but then we thought, okay, this should be more of a student service than just, "let's talk about the problem." It was more, "What can we do?," "What can we offer to the students?" It's the services. EOPS is state-funded. That's why [the USRC] was put under the EOPS program.

Other practitioners might require permission from the EOPS director to extend the services to other undocumented students; placing the USRC under EOPS automatically connects EOPS resources to all undocumented students using the USRC.

Likewise, the undocumented student program at Martin's community college had begun because of the Immigrants Rising Catalyst Grant. He noted: "Because we knew that it was just a

grant, we strategically decided to advocate for the [undocumented student program] to be under [a larger umbrella of equity programs.]" He continued, "We decided to fight for it to become a [equity] program so that it can become institutionalized." In this way, they accessed the more stable student equity funding.

Hiring. Meyerson (2003) provides an example of an individual whose small wins consisted of being very involved in recruiting minority candidates to his organization and asking the minority candidates who were hired to commit to hiring other minority candidates (p.103). This strategy was instrumental in increasing minority representation in his organization. Hiring is part of a strategy to change organizations because it is a way of bringing in new employees who have values and identities that contrast current organizational norms; researchers suggest that hiring increases the capabilities of organizations and helps them adapt (Jain, 2016). Creating new positions also builds the capacity to take on the responsibilities of creating change (Richer & Stopper, 1999).

Hiring was also an important component of change in support of undocumented students. Ten participants noted hiring as a tactic for change. Like the examples given by Meyerson, the participants who talked about hiring individuals for existing or new positions talked about being very involved and intentional at every step of the process. When Brenda and her advisory team advocated for a counselor specializing in undocumented student issues, Brenda noted that they put a substantial amount of work into thinking about the ideal qualities of that position. She described a position that was "high enough caliber where they are required to understand the federal and state laws, but broad enough that maybe a student with a mixed-status family might feel more comfortable going into without lights flashing, 'undocumented.'" She also described the need for a counselor to understand how to serve undocumented students with intersectional

needs, such as undocumented who also identify as LGBTQ students, single parents, or veterans. These intentional conversations went into their advocacy for new positions.

Other practitioners were intentional in the recruitment process. For example, Mayra shared her experience hiring a full-time counselor. She started by considering student needs and what kind of position and hire would give undocumented students the most support. She said, "The first inclination is to put in a student intern or student worker, which is incredibly powerful as peer advising. But then I said, 'No, I need to kick it up a notch.'" Mayra was putting thought into what was going to be most supportive and sustainable. The timing felt right because she had a budget that needed to be spent. In addition to that, she had a specific person in mind for the job. She explained:

> There was a transfer advisor [at another institution], and she was a champion. She did her best to help any undocumented [transfer] student get a full tuition ride. So I recognized her commitment to the institution. She was looking for work because she wanted to expand her portfolio and transition over to community college. I said, 'Okay, I know you have demonstrated the commitment.' I worked with the chair to meet with her to see if it was okay because the chairs are the ones who make these decisions, and he agreed. That's how she was plugged in.

This exemplifies the very intentional actions concerning hiring and recruitment to support undocumented students. Not only did Mayra identify and recruit this "champion," she also intentionally involved those who held the ultimate decision.

Denise made a change to the structure of the new hire's time. She pointed out a former practice to assign a new hire to 50% working with undocumented students and 50% foster youth. Then she said:

But when I came in, I changed that because I think it's important to have 100% of someone's time, even if they're part-time, to a specific student population. That 50%, I don't believe that it works. I think somebody definitely needs to be 100% dedicated; even if they're part-timers, or full-timers, they cannot be split, because [these student populations] have very unique circumstances. Especially with legislation that requires additional time and understanding of how these legislations affect student experiences.

When the employee with a 50/50 assignment resigned, Denise eventually filled the gap with two adjunct counselors and a project assistant who were 100% assigned to support undocumented students.

Brenda, Mayra, and Denise were all in positions where they had the power to make decisions or give formal input about hiring full-time or part-time employees. As a classified staff member, Elsa did not have that same ability. However, she took a different route to hiring, which still made an enormous difference for students. After realizing she did not have enough capacity to serve all the undocumented students who needed help with their financial aid, she noted, "I asked the equity committee to give me money so that I can hire [undocumented students]; to train them, and at least have them answer general questions. That would alleviate my time to keep running programs, and things like that."

Hiring this group of student employees in the financial aid department created new communication and information-sharing structures with undocumented students. The group received recognition for its success: "At the time, we had helped almost 400 DREAMers unduplicated for one semester who wouldn't have otherwise gotten any form of aid. But they had contact with a peer and resolved whatever problem." Elsa achieved her goal of increasing her

capacity–and the capacity of the financial aid department– to support undocumented students by changing how undocumented students could share and access information.

5.2.5 Organizing Collective Action

As with Meyerson's spectrum of strategies, organizing collective action is the least-tempered tactic because it requires many individuals to come together with a similar understanding of or passion for undocumented student issues, usually in a visible way. This section explores how practitioners brought allies together so that they had more opportunities to take collective action and how practitioners were involved in a larger social movement for change. However, collective action still looked very different in the context of community colleges. The collective action taken might have pressured institutions to make some changes. However, the methods of collaborating, at least in this study, never looked like outright resistance or protest to the current community college norms.

Building professional work groups. A workgroup more formally discussed undocumented student needs and gaps in institutional support, advocated for change, and sometimes directly provided undocumented student programs and professional development. Dario, a counselor, recounted how he set out to try and change the culture in his institution by reaching out to an ally in the faculty to create an advisor group. He told her:

> I want to create an advisory group, but I don't want it to come out of my area. I want to work closely with someone outside my area because it shouldn't be an effort that's led only within the [undocumented student] services sphere. Other folks should be equally committed to the work and willing to look at policy, the campus culture, and how the policies we have enacted hurt or help students.

Rosario offered a different method for identifying people who would be part of her formal inner circle of undocumented student allies:

> I was very selective and strategic about whom I would ask to be part of my DREAM Team. I didn't go to the offices and say 'Send me somebody.' I went to the offices and asked if they would allow such-and-such person to work with me. Based on my experiences with the individual, I could tell if they truly care for our DREAMers, right?

In addition to meeting the individual to see if they understood the importance of knowledge and trust when working with the undocumented student community, Rosario would also introduce new allies to undocumented students through the student club. She believed students would be more willing to see someone they were introduced to as an undocumented ally. This hands-on tactic is how Rosario forged relationships with practitioners across campus. She regularly communicated with this professional group and provided updates and resources to ensure they met undocumented students' needs.

Martin took a similar route to creating a professional work group. He noted that he worked at the institution in other roles for several years and had been "slowly collecting my group of friends. So when I began this role, I told all my really close friends, 'You are joining our [advisory committee]. I need to see how you can support my students within your department'" One of those friends was Martin's former supervisor, now a director of admissions, who has an important role in undocumented student support. Martin's past experiences with practitioners across the college allowed him to be strategic about whom he placed on the advisory committee. Taking action to create these advisory groups opened up opportunities for action.

Off-Campus Organizing and Partnerships. Some professional work groups who have worked to support undocumented students were not specifically focused on undocumented students or were outside of the institution. Cynthia was part of an affinity group for Latinx professionals who were "committed to creating a space for sharing high-impact practices in addressing equity, diversity, and social justice in [this college]." Undocumented students fell under that work.

Martin discussed his partnership outside his community college: "We work closely with our local California State University, and so we actually had monthly meetings with them." Together, they co-hosted an end-of-the-year undocumented student celebration, submitted for and received a grant, collaborated on different programs and services for undocumented students, and wrote reports. Martin noted, "We are also working with other campuses for our UndocuAlly training. I contacted around ten colleges across the state for their practices and approach to UndocuAlly training. I'm trying to see if they can bring that to this campus." These relationships with allies at other colleges created many opportunities for change within his community college.

Two practitioners noted groups they were part of at the district level working on change for undocumented students. I include those here because their involvement in these groups seemed to be outside the reach of their community colleges. In other words, community college leadership did not question decisions that happened at the district level and had a limited capacity to temper the district's actions. Mayra and Pedro were part of groups in their respective districts that made decisions and recommendations for serving undocumented students in their district's colleges.

One participant used his experience as a community organizer to mobilize undocumented students on his campus. Jesus described taking undocumented students to a national conference on undocumented student issues at UCLA to make connections there; he also described taking students to participate in a march at a detention center in Los Angeles. These were made possible with Jesus's connections to organizations outside of his community college. He also described bringing community organizers to meet with students: "My mentors, who I learned from and the way that I would connect with people in the community and students –I was able to bridge that and bring those kinds of people to the campus who otherwise would not have come out, people who are involved since the '70s and '80s [immigration justice], and would make a special appearance and be present." He added, "I am an organizer. I don't really embrace that kind of title. These are the things I need to get done and the level of support to draw resources to communities that have been overlooked." This kind of grassroots community organizing felt different from that of other participants. It seemed to fall outside of the organizational norms.

Changing legislation. There is a social movement in support of undocumented people that transcends community colleges. Some practitioners are part of this movement or interact with this movement through advocacy for change at a state or federal level. Seven practitioners mentioned being personally involved or knowing a practitioner involved in a more significant movement to change state or federal policy that would affect undocumented students. For some practitioners, this advocacy work involved paying attention to new legislation and ensuring that allies and leaders on campus supported the change. Lorena mentioned, "If there's a new law, anything we could do to get the campus to sign something. For example, they sent an email to write to our local congressperson. So, I went through the channels and got our president to sign this document and send it over to the right people." This was one way Lorena advocated and

lobbied as part of a greater movement. Pedro mentioned his work “in the community and outside of the state traveling to Sacramento and to DC to advocate and lobby to get DACA codified.” Being undocumented, he had a personal stake in larger collective efforts.

Three practitioners spoke about having a hand in changing policies at the state level. Brenda was involved in an effort to provide free dual enrollment for undocumented adult learners who did not qualify for DACA or the DREAM Act because they did not have a high school diploma. She recounted, “We ran a pilot project. This subsequently led to the support of nonpartisan education think tanks, which led to support from a Senator. And we were able to get dual enrollment approved for adults working on high school diploma or GED.” The fruits of this collective action were monumental:

> Now, SB 554 out of my college, allows for an undocumented student to attend college for free as long as they don't have a United States high school diploma or GED. If they're enrolled in an adult school and taking one course at an adult school, they're allowed to take up to 11 units per semester for free at a community college. There's no time limit. If they were in that GED prep course for five years, they attend college and earn an associate's degree or higher.

As a result of California’s success in supporting undocumented students with this change in legislative policy, Brenda was also invited to speak at events outside of California, where she advocated for similar policies.

Mayra offered another example of how another practitioner at the district was always looking for opportunities to draft statements or proposals the chancellor could send to state decision-makers: “She is always looking out for what she can draft that the chancellor can take to an assembly member who will carry it up to the state.” One example was advocating for the

federal Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act (CARES Act), which gave colleges financial aid they could distribute to documented college students, to also include undocumented students. Mayra said, “[The chancellor] used his position to actually say COVID-19 has no boundaries.” This is partly due to the allies in the district and on campus who were always looking for opportunities to support undocumented students and voiced their frustration with the gaps in relief for students during COVID-19.

5.3 Summary of Chapter Five

In this chapter, I explored the tactics practitioners employ to enact change in support of undocumented students. I organized tactics under five categories mirroring Meyerson’s spectrum of strategies but retheorized three categories to fit the undocumented student issue and community college contexts.

Resisting quietly and staying true to one’s self remained the first tactic category, including tactics used by practitioners that were small in scope and intent of impact. Supporting students on a one-on-one basis and identifying and leveraging relationships with a few allies were tactics that were easy to engage in under the radar. However, these tactics rarely led to significant institutional changes. Change might occur instead for individual undocumented students or the practitioners themselves. The tactics under leveraging higher education norms included practitioners using the agency of their roles, helping undocumented students once their formal work was done, and leveraging what other community colleges were doing to support undocumented students. These were less tempered but still common ways to support undocumented students within the acceptable practices of the community college.

Tactics in the expanding and sustaining visibility category required the involvement of more individuals. Selling undocumented student support and educating the community cannot

happen in secret or entirely behind closed doors. The impact of these tactics is also more extensive, like prioritizing undocumented student issues and producing cohorts of trained allies that can increase the support capacity for undocumented students at community colleges.

Targeting doable changes to organizational norms and organizing collective action were less common tactics among the practitioners but had the potential to lead to higher impact. Formalizing practitioner groups to advocate for undocumented students, working to change legislation, and ensuring that the college adopts new processes to implement new policies are among the tactics that lead to new organizational schemas that calcify undocumented student support. These are the changes that genuinely start to align community college values with those of practitioners who care about supporting undocumented students.

Chapter 6 Cycling Through the Opportunities and the Constraints for Actions in Support of Undocumented Students

The actions that practitioners took toward change were made possible *and* were tempered by the context for action. Following the tempered radicals framework, this context for action constantly changes because actions produce consequences that form new contexts with new opportunities for action. Concurrently, potentially new constraints make the context less favorable for change for undocumented students. This adverse context tempers action or makes it difficult to take any action. This chapter explores those favorable and adverse contexts for change in support of undocumented students at a community college.

First, this chapter explores seven components of community college contexts that practitioners highlighted. Each component can illustrate a favorable or adverse context for change for undocumented students, and many factors can contribute to which side of the spectrum the component will fall. I also provide analysis in this section as to adverse contexts and the connection to colleges and practitioners engage in tempered resistance. Ultimately, the components dictate whether it will be easier or harder to make future changes supporting undocumented students.

The second part of this chapter explores the factors that contribute to favorable and adverse contexts. I have organized these factors into three sections. The first section explores relevant changes to these community colleges' socio-political and economic environments in the form of external episodic events. Although the institutional change supporting undocumented students at community colleges is continuous, these events also show the episodic change within

the last seven years. These episodic events cause significant ripples in the context for action, providing practitioners with opportunities and challenges.

The second section explores what, at the level of the organization, provided opportunities and constraints to action. In this section, we explore practitioners' views of the more immediate socio-political contexts of these colleges, formal practitioner groups, administrative support, department structures and cultures, data discourses and systems, and the role of past institutionalized support in paving the way for future action. This section highlights how institutions interpreted state and national undocumented student narratives and policies. These factors combined created unique opportunities and constraints for participants across different colleges.

The final section looks at individual-level factors related to positionality and relationships, particularly with supervisors or managers in other areas of the college. These factors added to the idiosyncratic nature of each practitioner's context for action, even in the same organization, and illustrated some ways the context for action might change for individual participants across time.

6.1 Favorable and Adverse Contexts for Action in Support of Undocumented Students

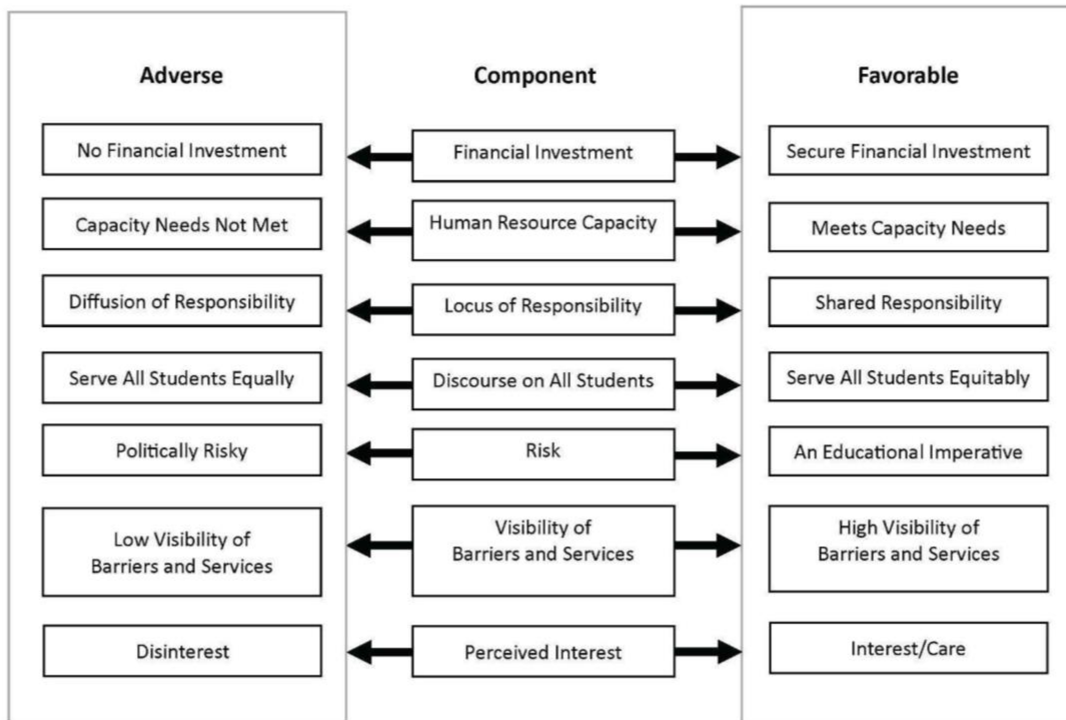
Practitioners take actions within favorable and adverse contexts that provide the opportunity for actions and temper them, respectively. Twenty-seven practitioners represented 16 community colleges, meaning 16 different organizational contexts were represented in this study. Practitioners' role within the organization can also change their perspective of how the organizational context provides opportunities or constrains actions.

Practitioner interviews revealed seven components of the context for action at the community colleges. Each component has two sides, ranging from adverse contexts to favorable

contexts for action in undocumented students. Here, I explore these components and what they look like on a spectrum of favorable to adverse contexts: financial investment, human resource capacity, locus of responsibility, discourse on all students, risk, visibility of barriers and services, and perceived interest. Figure 4 illustrates the seven characteristics of the spectrum. I conclude this section with insights on how tempered radicalism, and a new concept, tempered resistance, are working in alignment with these components.

Figure 4

Components that Contribute to Adverse and Favorable Contexts for Action in Support of Undocumented Students at Community Colleges



6.1.1 Financial Investment

Institutionalization and sustainability of support for undocumented students rely on financial investment in the structures, policies, practices, and people that make support for undocumented students a routine part of colleges. Many scholars have documented the need for

undocumented students to find alternative ways to afford their education and living expenses (Abrego, 2006; Albrecht, 2007; Chen, 2013; Contreras, 2009; Flores, 2010; McGray, 2006; & Olivérez, 2006). Indeed, financial investment in students is, therefore, necessary to support their access and retention in colleges. However, few scholars have addressed the need for financial investment in direct undocumented student aid and building the infrastructure for sustainable support.

We have already discussed how practitioners take action by actively looking for and engaging in processes to receive funding from various sources. For those who succeed in establishing funding, the context for action can change dramatically. The more institutions invest in support for undocumented students, the easier it is to act for further change. Not having funding support makes a more complex context for action. When I asked Daniel about the major challenges of institutionalizing support for undocumented students, he answered, "I'm sure you are going to hear this a lot, but it is the funding." Eleven other practitioners joined Daniel in explicitly mentioning that there was not enough funding. Hector had also heard that there was a dearth of funding at his college. However, Hector believed there were untapped opportunities to fund support for undocumented students, such as the state's equity funds:

> We're an HSI, and we have equity funding from the state to do this. I mean, that's why we get this money. So, for the institution to say we don't have the money to support it or it's going to take away from these other big institutional things, it's so contradictory. And that's where a lot of the stops happen.

Hector was bewildered by the lack of funding for the support of undocumented students, feeling that the community colleges' communication and funding priorities did not match. He felt strongly that the lack of funding stifled change.

Although funding was a big issue for many participants, the number of practitioners explicitly mentioning funding as a considerable challenge still comprised less than half of the practitioners (n=12). Another 12 practitioners pointed to funding sources without mentioning funding explicitly. Although it would be a mistake to assume funding was not a barrier for these practitioners, it was clear that the funding they did secure played an essential role in offering new services and expanding the capacity of the staff and programming. For example, compared to Hector's institution, Mayra's college used equity funds to support undocumented students. Mayra noted:

> The student equity initiative really, really, helped out. We opened a welcome center under my oversight. What I did with the funds—I had become a [an administrator]—So, I hired a counselor, you know, part-time counselor to be dedicated specifically to undocumented students, and that counselor was housed in the welcome center.

Mayra used the available funds to take action as an administrator of those funds. Whether institutions had funding and sought opportunities for funding for undocumented students made a difference in the context of taking action to support undocumented students.

6.1.2 Human Resource Capacity

Although funding was an essential part of the story for at least 24 participants, it was not the only thing that set the context for change. Closely related to funding was human resource capacity. Limited human resource capacity also limited participants' actions to support undocumented students. Twelve practitioners stated they had limited capacity to support undocumented students because of the lack of personnel or limited hours for personnel. When the institution's context changed, usually due to hiring or re-distributing roles, this provided more

opportunities for action to support undocumented students, usually because there was simply more time to act. Denise provided an example:

> We are not yet through the spring semester. In the fall, we had 120 counseling appointments; thus far, we now have 280. And I say that was because we didn't have a full team in the fall, and our counselors were doing things like scheduling appointments. When our full team came on board, counselors could focus their time on counseling students, and we could do some of the logistical pieces separately so that the counselor didn't have to attend all the meetings. Now, our peer mentors or project assistants can attend these meetings, which makes a huge difference.

More personnel freed up time for counselors to fulfill their formal role and leave marginal tasks to other staff. This translated into real change in how many students they were able to serve and how they shared responsibility for keeping the work visible in on-campus meetings.

Compare Denise's improved context for her counselors to Alma's situation. Alma is a counselor at an institution that, she believes, has not dedicated enough employees to serving undocumented students. She talked about her major struggle acting for change for undocumented students in the ways she would like: "I am struggling with having someone dedicated full-time to this position. I am the main contact for undocumented students, but I am also a counselor, so I wear two hats. I am part-time; I am not full-time." Alma did not have the additional help to expand support adequately. She noted, "especially now with the fellowship program." That was a new program that would be made available and would require additional training and outreach time. This understandably overwhelmed Alma, who did not understand how she would do it all in 20 hours a week.

In addition to limiting the scope and scale of work each personnel can do, limiting capacity also sends messages to employees and students that the institution is not invested in undocumented student success. Bernardo noted this explicitly. “Students see that there’s no full-time staff on campus. When they seek help, there’s no stability for providing the necessary services because no one is there every day.” Not being able to have the personnel needed to provide services was a signal to Bernardo that the institution was not as supportive of undocumented students as it communicated it was. Therefore, whether a college had the human resource capacity to serve undocumented students mattered because of the perceived ability to get the work done and what it signaled about the college’s culture and willingness to serve undocumented students.

6.1.3 Locus of Responsibility

Who is responsible for undocumented student support and change efforts? This is a cultural question that can differ from college to college. Colleges can land on a spectrum that ranges from sharing responsibility across all employees at the college to the diffusion of responsibility, where only one or a few people are tasked with supporting undocumented students and relieving others of the responsibility.

Few practitioners in this study described a college culture of shared responsibility for undocumented student support. Denise came the closest to describing this culture of shared responsibility at her current institution and juxtaposed it with her former institution. She noted that to get faculty to training workshops at her former institution, they had to offer an incentive, usually in the form of payment. Denise said that although there was a general caring for students at her former institution, the involvement culture became one where employees would ask, “What is in it for me if I go?”

The culture was different at her current institution, where she described a room full of sixty people and recounted asking, "'Are they getting paid?' And [the organizers] said 'No. We are here because we want to.' I went to another workshop for another event. Again, a bunch of people…And I realized it's the culture." Denise explained the culture at her current institution further:

> Regardless of who you are, I am going to help you. Regardless of your position or title, I am going to help you…I felt we were able to create that culture in a tiny corner at my former institution within EOPS. But when I got to [this college] it was across the campus.

Denise describes a culture where everyone feels a sense of responsibility for student success, not just one campus area.

Most participants described the diffusion of responsibility. That is, the idea that individuals are less likely to feel they have a responsibility to take action if there are others that share in that responsibility (Castrellón, 2021). For example, Dario hoped that bringing college stakeholders from different areas and a new grant would lead to an advisory group that could start initiatives across the campus. Dario described being at a college that was very supportive. However, he explained how diffusion of responsibility posed a challenge for him.

> It ended up being, 'Hey, Dario, we should do X, Y, and Z,' versus 'Hey, how can I roll up my sleeves and help you create this culture, like an affinity program? How can I help you create all these initiatives?' Folks get it. They want us to continue supporting, but it's never like, 'Hey, how can I help you.'"

Again, Dario is describing a culture where the responsibility for undocumented student success is not shared because people feel like there is already someone who is handling the issues with undocumented students. He lamented this current context: "There should be other folks equally

committed to the work and willing to look at policy, at the campus culture, and how the policies we enacted hurt or help students."

The diffusion of responsibility contributed to limited capacity for action and the marginalization of support for undocumented students to a small campus area. Under this culture, the brunt of institutional change for undocumented students fell on the shoulders of a few practitioners who held formal positions dedicated to that student population. In contexts where responsibility was shared, the practitioners who held formal positions to support undocumented students were coordinators of the shared responsibility.

Barbara described experiencing both of these cultures. At her former college, Barbara's role as part of her job description was to coordinate and foster a shared responsibility for undocumented student support: "At [my prior college], I feel like everyone had a role…They were pro-undocumented students from the top down… the president was at the meeting, she was individually addressing me…different departments were doing different things." She described a culture where everyone actively looked at undocumented student trends in their areas and addressed them in a coordinated effort. As coordinator, she organized staff training across campus and gathered data from the different areas. The college president's presence and participation gave legitimacy to the coordinated effort.

Her current institution exhibited a different culture. She noted, "It is the culture that [the work] falls on one person." At her current institution, only one practitioner had undocumented student support as part of their job description, and she was primarily responsible for undocumented student support. This person had meetings to give updates and reach out to people when she needed support, but ultimately took the majority of actions to support undocumented students independently. Key institutional stakeholders, like the president, did not participate in

these meetings and other campus events. In this way, the diffusion of responsibility created a context that was not amenable to action supporting undocumented students.

Practitioners in this study pointed to times when college leaders cultivated a culture where it was challenging to support undocumented students unless it was part of the practitioners' formal job description. Carmen recounted being asked by leaders at her institution about whether her work supporting undocumented students was part of her job. "Higher-ups, trustees, and people like that would ask, 'Is this really your role?' Or, 'Is this what you were hired to do?' That's why you had to stay so on point with everything else so they couldn't take it away from you." Carmen worked many after-hours in her office, preparing to support undocumented students. She felt she could not take time from her regular day to do the work without the potential to face resistance and retaliation.

Elsa also worked at the same institution as Carmen and experienced similar pressures. She relayed, "I was stepping outside of my role a lot. I was doing programming." She faced similar pressure to stop going outside the bounds of her formal job description to support undocumented students.

> I was classified staff, so they brought up the concern that the union could say, "Elsa is doing work outside of her classified position, and if she wanted to ask for overtime or a stipend because she's doing work outside of her position, then she would be able to." The district said that they had no funding for that. And I said, "No problem, I haven't asked for overtime until now. I have never asked for overtime." So then they took measures to protect–to honor–the classified contract. To make sure that I wasn't working too much, which is valid because there was a lot to do on top of my actual work. I had my actual work and then the DREAMer component.

Elsa did not dispute the leadership's reasoning for constraining her actions in support of undocumented students. The college's leadership did not take initiative to replace or re-distribute the work she had done for undocumented students to other practitioners. Thus, Elsa noted that when she left that position for another, there was nobody to continue the work with undocumented students in that key area. Carmen and Elsa's experiences express another underlying message leaders send to practitioners: undocumented student support is not part of "normal" work.

This message was not specific to Elsa and Carmen's community college. Barbara spoke more directly about leaders marginalizing undocumented student work, "So we literally spent like a whole year trying to find a financial aid [undocumented student] liaison. But it was hard because that meant asking someone with a role to do quote-unquote [gestured air quotes with her fingers] *additional work.*" She mentioned that the director saw appointing an undocumented student liaison as asking someone to do more work outside their role. Barbara noted that his perspective did not make sense: "Their expertise is financial aid. So they are there to help with the California DREAM Act, you know?"

Again, Barbara perceives a diffusion of responsibility here because the director attributes supporting undocumented students with the California DREAM Act as an extra task outside the job description of general financial aid counselors. This attribution communicates that no one is responsible for undocumented student financial support until the director gives them this task. Moreover, it is considered an additional burden rather than a regular advising duty.

6.1.4 Discourse on All Students

Going hand-in-hand with the diffusion of responsibility is the everyday discourse on college campuses informs the culture around who support is for and whether it is general or

specialized support. Although beliefs and values may vary among the practitioners on campus, the dominant discourse can determine which actions based on those values and beliefs come to fruition and which actions die on the vine. It can be more challenging to take action for undocumented students at colleges where the dominant discourse is about serving all students *equally* and prioritizing the needs of the *general student population*. These discourses differ from colleges where the dominant discourse was about serving all students *equitably,* which created better opportunities to define what support for undocumented students looked like across the college. Sixteen practitioners mentioned discourse on all students and how that discourse fits into the overall context. Almost half of the participants (n=10) spoke about serving all students equally or prioritizing the general population as a barrier.

Alicia provided a prime example of difficulty serving undocumented students and creating change in a college context where the dominant discourse was about serving all students equally. Alicia was on the college website as a counselor who could assist undocumented students because she understood their needs. However, Alicia's formal role was a *general* counselor, and despite being on the website as someone undocumented students should reach out to, she was unable to set appointments aside for undocumented students, even though their issues needed timely resolution. She stated

> I [work with undocumented students] all the time. However, my schedule is not designated for undocumented students. They have to schedule the same as any other student. They don't have the privilege to make an appointment with me. They have to wait two weeks if I don't have anything, just like any other student.

This is reflective of a "treating all students equally" model. Despite the unique needs of undocumented students, counseling directors did not permit counselors to prioritize those needs.

Not being able to alter her schedule was especially problematic considering that Alicia was listed on her college website as the counselor that undocumented students should feel safe to contact to get support.

Under the discourse that students should have the same experiences, it was difficult to make the case that serving undocumented students would not take away from the general student experience or the experience of other minoritized groups such as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer (LGBTQ) students, foster students, and formerly incarcerated students. Jesus (a faculty member at a community college in a conservative district) provided another example of serving all students equally-context. He believed this was a common discourse at many institutions: “The narrative you hear at many institutions is also present at [this college]: ‘You can’t be too much for one student population.’ So, there is that ‘we care about all students’ that is presented at face value.” In other words, Jesus perceived a common belief that “caring about all students” meant treating everyone the same. This narrative also suggested that not treating everyone equally would place student populations in a zero-sum game where some groups received more support than others. He said this was presented at face value because it was an unquestioned assumption, signaling that this discourse is part of the dominant culture of the college. At his institution this narrative was weaponized to make the general public believe that providing undocumented students with specialized support and resources would harm other students.

Carlos also noted that treating the students the same is a common belief among faculty who are resistant to providing specialized support to minoritized populations.

> [The faculty have] more of an equality framework than an equity framework, right? It’s like – and I think it goes back to the whole grading thing, right? They feel they need to

> be equal so that everyone is graded the same. So it's harder for them to get behind that equity framework of, "Let's start looking at each student a little bit more individually and providing support in that way."

Although he notes that the pushback is general, not just specific to undocumented students, this treating all students equally discourse still created an adverse context for supporting undocumented students.

A minority of practitioners explicitly mentioned or alluded to a college context (separate from their personal beliefs on what serving all students means) in which all students were understood in equity terms. Mayra mentioned that after receiving equity funds from the state, the college culture became much more receptive to boldly supporting undocumented students. Denise indicated that at her college, the president communicated an equity-centered college culture that they embodied in its motto and practices. For example, the college implemented email signature icons that signaled allyship for different minoritized groups (e.g., a Pride flag for LGBTQ allies, a monarch butterfly for undocumented students, etc.). Despite an individual's comment in the meeting questioning the use of these icons, it was clear that the dominant culture supported the icons to signal that these groups were a priority. This college's dominant discourse emphasized serving all students equitably, making it easier to support undocumented students because that support was in line with that value.

6.1.5 Organizational Risk

Practitioners alluded to another major discourse that framed undocumented student support that contributed to the ability or inability to take action–whether undocumented student support was framed as risky. Risk occurred at various levels. Supporting undocumented students was seen as politically risky for community colleges because of the negative immigration

rhetoric present in the U.S. widely, which leaders fear may result in negative consequences for the institution. In this study, participants also perceived that their college felt it was risky to expose the ways that the college did not serve the needs of undocumented students. Finally, there was a personal risk to challenging the status quo of the college. This risk was in contrast to a few colleges and particular instances where the discourse leaned toward undocumented support being an educational imperative, which minimized risk.

Seven practitioners described contexts where they could not take action because the community college leadership feared resistance from the community, alums, or board of trustees. For example, Rosario had trouble funding programs through donations because the institution feared that alums would not approve of supporting undocumented students. Rosario stated:

> I went to [development office], and I said, “When you guys are soliciting funding in the community, can you put on your website that we also have undocumented students so people can donate to that?” I had a little resistance because some of the donors see that and panic, saying, “Oh, are they strictly supporting undocumented students,” I mean, do they know that it is a law?

Jesus experienced leadership at his college not being vocal about issues because of the risk of angering these same donor groups: “There are going to be some very strong interests that are also part of maybe the foundation, donors, the alumni, that are very strongly opposed to [this college] holding a strong position in advocating for undocumented students.” The county where Jesus’s college was located had powerful stakeholders who opposed serving undocumented students.

However, participants perceived leadership feared talking about undocumented student issues, even in colleges located in communities without organized opposition to undocumented

students. Hector noted, “[College leaders] just think it's too political. But we're at the moment in time where we cannot be fearful anymore. That kind of attitudinal blockage prevents us from having institutional changes that will cater to the needs of our students.” Hector was clear that this fear of being political negatively affected the context in which they could take action.

In addition to being politically risky, some practitioners also relayed the professional risk they felt if they advocated for change in less-tempered ways. For example, Sonia was student services staff at her college. She had heard a rumor that a member of her college’s leadership had convinced a committee to block an effort to support undocumented students “It looks as if the committee's decision was made together and like, ‘Okay,’ but it was people acting outside trying to convince others not to approve something or not to do this or not to support that.” She felt she could not voice her concerns, “I felt like, “Oh my gosh, I can't say anything. I should. This is not right, but I just can't.” She felt like speaking up would be too risky for her.

Ana also didn’t feel ready to push any boundaries at her college yet, noting she was still learning. “Part of it was a pick your battles type of thing… let’s not ruffle feathers on that, and unfortunately, in institutions, there’s that limitation of the politics, and I’m still learning.” She, therefore, relied on her job description when taking action for undocumented students. Sonia and Ana both avoided actions that might call too much attention or cause controversy.

In Elsa’s case, it was clear that the community college leadership’s assessment of organizational risk hampered her efforts to significantly change the data structures at her institution to more efficiently and accurately identify undocumented students and their needs “was not welcomed.” She added, “We wanted to rehaul the Cal grant program, which had shown many things that were wrong for many years. But the district made the decision not to move forward if [our changes] showed [the data posed] too many obstacles; if too many obstacles were

to come to light.” Institutional leaders became particularly risk-averse after changes had triggered the state to audit its financial aid department. This audit made structural and procedural changes to data feel especially risky for Elsa’s community college. District leaders no longer granted Elsa access to the data that was causing so many issues for undocumented students.

There are other institutions where serving undocumented students was not considered a risk. Other colleges communicated that serving undocumented students was important to the institution's purpose. Dario and Denise described institutions and contexts where they never felt fear about advocating for undocumented students or felt they had to convince anyone of the importance of undocumented student support. Dario stated, “I’ve never had any direct confrontation about why we support the work. I’ve never had to argue why I need data access.” Unlike the participants who perceived they could not do something because aiding undocumented students felt like a political risk, Dario has never received pushback or experienced hesitancy at his institution connected to the political nature of undocumented student issues. He believed this was because of his college’s location and local political context. Denise noted, “For a long time, I felt like as a student I needed to justify who I was, as a professional I needed to justify who I was, but then here, I don’t feel like that.” She feels this is because of a culture her institution created in which equity is prioritized and lived out through the action and commitment of most campus practitioners. Within this context, she did not feel like there was a risk in speaking up. She continued, “I think that brings comfort where people can speak.”

6.1.6 Visibility of Barriers and Services

Visibility refers to whether undocumented student barriers and services are noticed and prominent in campus spaces and discussions. The prior chapter explored how practitioners sought to build and maintain visibility of the issues and the services for undocumented students.

Nevertheless, this was also an essential part of the context for further action. The more visibility of undocumented students' unique challenges and barriers, the harder it was to ignore them. When college leaders could not ignore issues, they needed to address them through action. The visibility of services and solutions to undocumented student barriers was an important part of maintaining institutional support in the form of resources. Visibility was also critical to ensure that undocumented students would be aware and take advantage of the services.

Most of the 12 practitioners who identified visibility as a critical part of the context for undocumented student change did not feel undocumented student issues and services had adequate visibility. The exception was when immigration issues were a major topic of national debate. Carlos and Carmen were administrators at the same community college, and both addressed this context. For example, Carlos suggested that when undocumented immigrant issues were in the national spotlight, it helped things move forward. Carmen also felt that action was more straightforward in the context in which undocumented issues were visible. She noted, "[undocumented students are] mentioned when immigration issues arise. So, DACA is in the Supreme Court. Okay, [college leadership will] talk about it then." When immigration issues were salient, it was more difficult for decision-makers at the college to ignore any calls to respond from students and their allies.

However, the services for undocumented students created when immigrant issues were salient still lacked visibility for practitioners in this study. Carlos noted this and hoped that that would change:

> I would hope that the center is a visible symbol of [this college's] commitment to undocumented students. A student could just walk on campus and walk into the Dream Resource Center and say, "Hey, can you help me?"

Without this visibility, Carlos felt that students hesitant to disclose their status would not use the services. These services would become irrelevant to the college leaders who provided the resources to sustain them. These low-visibility contexts foster ignorance, reproduce the status quo, and support inaction among decision-makers.

6.1.7 Perceived Interest in Taking Action

Another context component was whether participants perceived individuals in the organization and sometimes entire offices and departments communicating or showing interest in undocumented student issues. Individual, departmental, or institutional inaction often communicated disinterest or disregard for undocumented student issues. Cynthia (student services staff) stated, “It's not like, ‘No, we can’t do that.’ It's just nothing. Nothing happened...I will say it's more lack of interest or not knowing.” Both Cynthia and Barbara communicated a culture of inaction at their community college.

In another part of southern California, Hector and Bernardo also noted a perceived disinterest from different stakeholders at their community college. Hector noted that his faculty peers “are either blind to [undocumented student] problems, choose to be blind, or just don't care.” Therefore, Hector believed faculty were not going to embrace actions in support of undocumented students. Bernardo recounted inaction even when individuals or departments had access to information or an opportunity to act:

> I’ve attended meetings where I or other people have talked about undocumented students and advocated, but then nothing happens. It’s not necessarily that I felt that it wasn’t okay to say something, but I already went in with the expectation that nothing was going to happen, which is very discouraging. It's a vibe, the environment that was created, that “you can say whatever you want to say to advocate,” but then it just stays in that meeting.

The fact that there was no action even after advocating a need for undocumented student support communicated that there is no interest in changing the status quo for undocumented students.

It was common for these inactions to go unnoticed as part of a broader problem because they are unassuming and appropriate options for practitioners; Cynthia mentioned faculty decisions to not attend a training after being sent information, Elsa noted nobody picking up an undocumented student financial aid peer program after she left her position in financial aid or Alma's example of no one following through on the implementation of a policy once the person in charge leaves the position. Each of these small inactions by others or on the part of whole departments and leadership takes minimal effort and creates a context in which action is discouraged and sustainable change is difficult.

Sometimes, not taking action was an intentional, strategic decision made by individuals who did not support change. Recall Sonia, who felt it was risky to say something about a rumor that some committee members had taken some actions to influence other members not to approve or support a proposal supporting undocumented students. Although I could not assess whether the rumor was true, it is reasonable to assume that individuals have reasons not to approve proposals and might be interested in convincing others that those reasons are valid. Non-action can take many forms, and many factors can contribute to a context where inaction, particularly around undocumented student support, is accepted and goes unnoticed.

On the other end of the spectrum, practitioners felt positive about leaders' and other practitioners' support when they showed interest in undocumented student issues. Practitioners felt that leaders and other practitioners cared when they took the initiative to support undocumented students, attended events, and generally took action to get things done. Brenda mentioned her vice president who could "fast-track" a policy and "move forward the mindset of

the approach” to implementation, which she perceived allowed there to be a cultural change. Lorena mentioned a counselor ally she greatly admired because she “never wavers” in her dedication to undocumented students. This ally decided to be the liaison for undocumented students in counseling because of her expertise in undocumented student issues. Taking these actions without waiting for other leaders and being a vocal advocate led Lorena to look up to this counselor. Practitioners can, therefore, gain insights, guidance, and support from leaders and allies around them whom they perceive genuinely care about undocumented student success. This perception can translate into a favorable context for further change.

6.1.8 Tempered Resistance Moves the Needle Away from Favorable Contexts

Examining the adverse contexts for change reveals how practitioners also have a role in reproduce these adverse contexts. I refer to these acts tempered resistance because (a) they are inconspicuous, (b) within the bounds of what is considered “normal” and appropriate in the community college, (c) practitioners cannot easily recognize or articulate these actions as resistance to change, and (d) they effectively resulted in sustaining the status quo and the adverse components of the context for change in support of undocumented students. Tempered resistance often took the form of inaction, communicating and reinforcing common higher education discourses based on unexamined assumptions, and enforcing “normal” policies and practices that reinforced the status quo *and* did not address concerns tempered radicals were trying to correct in the organization.

Tempered resistance to change in support of undocumented students did not have to be intentional (though it can be done with intention); practitioners may engage in tempered resistance without being aware that is what they are doing. This tempered resistance reinforces each component's adverse side of college contexts. For example, decisions not to fund new

positions or programs related to undocumented students or not to hire full-time employees for a USRC. This inaction from people responsible for finding funds and budgeting is a form of resistance whether or not they mean it in that way. This is especially true when there are no significant attempts to look for funding opportunities elsewhere or alleviate the capacity of those serving undocumented students. It is exceedingly easy for practitioners to engage in tempered resistance because, in many cases, it involves doing nothing at all. After all, there is no expectation to the contrary.

Sometimes it is easier to point to a moment of tempered resistance. Recall when Carmen suggested that trustees and other campus leaders would ask, “Is [supporting undocumented students] your job.” This questioning is another example of tempered resistance. This question is well within the parameters of what is considered appropriate within the organization. It may even be the leadership’s responsibility to ask that question. Therefore, it is difficult to repudiate. However, the impact of the leader’s question is the practitioner feeling like they cannot provide support to undocumented students because it is not perceived as congruent with their role. Furthermore, in Carmen’s and others' cases, there was no additional action to ensure that responsibility was redistributed to others, potentially leaving a service gap if Carmen did not find alternative ways to continue providing the services. This tempered resistance reinforces the diffusion of responsibility.

There are common discourses in higher education that symbolically and materially maintain status quo inequitable practices. When practitioners invoke these discourses, especially in response to attempted changes to support undocumented students, they are engaging in tempered resistance. Returning to Jesus’s example: “You can’t be too much for one student population…We care about all students.” This statement is a form of resistance because it

suggests that a focus on undocumented support is inappropriate. However, the statement is tempered because it is based on the unexamined assumption that addressing the needs of one student group would mean not caring about students outside of that group. It is difficult to refute that institutions should care about all students.

Tempered resistance in the form of inaction, organizational norms, and common discourses also arose in the reproduction of a context that maintained risky environments and encouraged the invisibility of barriers and services for undocumented students and disinterest in change. I will continue highlighting the role of tempered resistance as I explore the factors contributing to adverse and favorable contexts.

6.2 Factors Contributing to Adverse and Favorable Contexts

Factors external to the colleges and at the organizational and individual levels contributed to the practitioners' perception of where the needle fell on each of the seven components in their respective contexts. In this section, I explore how these factors contributed to adverse contexts supported and reinforced by the tempered resistance inherent in the organizational norms. I also present how these same factors contributed to favorable contexts for change for some participants, providing the windows for opportunity to take action.

6.2.1 External Episodic Events

Organizations do not experience social justice issues in a vacuum. What is happening socially, politically, and economically at the federal, state, and local community level about social justice issues also contributes to the context of action. As discussed in Chapter 1, this is the case with the immigration issue. The constantly changing immigration context is difficult for community colleges to ignore. Policies and public sentiment have direct implications for

community college students who are undocumented or have undocumented family members. Therefore, practitioners must pay attention to what is happening outside the institution, as it directly impacts how they advise, guide, and support undocumented students. The practitioners in the study mentioned several forces outside of their community colleges that created opportunities and potentially tempered action for undocumented students.

Several state, federal, and global events occurred over the last five years that changed the context for undocumented student support for CCCs in Southern California: The election of President Trump in 2016 and the rescinding of DACA, external funding opportunities, and the COVID-19 pandemic. These events are difficult to ignore in the analysis of the interview, given that all 27 participants mentioned at least one. Although much of the change in support of undocumented students is subtle and continuous, as the actions cycle would suggest, events external to CCCs tended to be a source of episodic change. We also cannot ignore the importance of these episodic changes to the context for action. Episodic events can be significant levers for change in organizations. Weick and Quinn (1999) talk about "episodic change" in organizations as occurring "in distinct periods during which shifts are precipitated by external events such as technology change or internal events such as a change in key personnel" (p. 365). The following section discusses each of the three events by providing an overview of the event and then discussing how the event motivated and potentially tempered action for the practitioners in this study.

The Election of President Trump and Rescinding of DACA. Ten of the 27 participants mentioned the election of President Trump in 2016 as a critical episodic event. As a candidate, Trump stoked anti-immigrant sentiment, particularly for those crossing the U.S. southern border with Mexico. What he said publicly and has been reported to say out of the public eye sought to

dehumanize, criminalize, and provoke violence toward the undocumented community. Trump famously began his presidential campaign by accusing immigrants from Mexico of being criminals: “When Mexico sends its people, they’re not sending their best…They’re sending people with lots of problems, and they’re bringing those problems with us. They’re bringing drugs. They’re bringing crime. They’re rapists. And some, I assume, are good people.” Two years later he continued to criminalize immigrants at the Mexico-U.S. border “Some people call it an invasion” He continued, “It’s like an invasion. They have violently overrun the Mexican border…So this isn’t an innocent group of people. It’s a large number of people that are tough. They’ve injured, they’ve attacked, and the Mexican police and military has actually suffered” (Scott, 2019). The New York Times reported that Trump suggested violence towards immigrants at the border, suggesting that border patrols shoot immigrants if they throw rocks or shoot them in the leg to slow them down. This was in addition to asking for cost estimates for electrified border walls with “spikes to pierce human flesh” and adding snakes and alligators to a water-filled trench (Shear & Davis, 2019, p. 3N). Beyond words, Trump took divisive actions, instituting a “zero tolerance policy” that separated more than 2,000 children from their families in detainment centers along the border and increased the number of border patrol to keep asylum-seekers in Mexico.

Among the most notable policies to directly affect undocumented students was the Trump administration's rescinding of DACA less than one year after his election in September 2017 (Department of Homeland Security, 2017). Nine of the 27 participants mentioned the repeal of DACA in 2017. According to the interviewees in this study, some of the workshops and support offered at community colleges included practical and financial help with DACA applications. Studies have highlighted the importance of the DACA decision for higher education institutions

that felt they had to respond to the DACA decision. However, their responses varied widely in tone and content (George Mwangi, Latafat, Thampikutty, & Van, 2019). The existence of DACA also posed questions of whether the Trump administration could use DACA applications to find and deport those who had applied for the program (Bahn & Radovic-Fanta, 2021). DACA continued to be important in the years after it was rescinded and continues to be in litigation.

The election of President Trump brought undocumented students and their families hypervisibility in society and the media. The negative rhetoric created fear of deportation, increased verbal harassment, and politicized bullying of immigrant students and their families. This was also the case in education specifically. In a survey by the Southern Poverty Law Center (2016), educators reported a negative impact on K-12 school climates for undocumented students immediately following the election. They coined this negative climate the “Trump effect.”

Muñoz, Vigil, Jach and Rodriguez-Gutierrez (2018) studied the Trump effect in two and four-year colleges and universities in Colorado, finding that undocumented students were experiencing hopelessness, emboldened racist-nativism, and exploitation of their labor in addition to shared solidarity in the time after Trump was elected. Similarly, Gomez and Perez-Hubers’ (2019) study focused on 10 undocumented college students in California and also found fear and uncertainty for the future as a result of Trump’s anti-immigrant rhetoric in addition to empowerment to resist, remain resilient, and maintain hope. The many studies that arose focused on undocumented students in the “Trump era” is a testament to the importance of this event for undocumented students and their colleges and universities (e.g., Andrade, 2019; Green, 2019; Streitwieser et al., 2020; Valdivia, Clark-Ibáñez, Schacht, Duran, & Mendoza, 2021).

The heinous words and actions of President Trump and his administration were a detriment to the undocumented population. However, many participants mentioned President

Trump's election and DACA's rescission as catalyzing events. Undocumented people and allies met Trump's anti-immigrant rhetoric with protest demonstrations in communities nationwide and on community college campuses (Andrade, 2019; Freeman-Wong, 2022; Gomez & Perez-Huber, 2019). Mark, a faculty member who advised and mentored undocumented students on his campus, shared that experience: "The 2016 Fall election of Trump brought broader awareness on campus." He also mentioned DACA, "Then, with the ending of DACA in September 2017, that was a moment that really energized us. The students and I had a couple of marches on campus." These events changed the context by bringing awareness and visibility to undocumented student issues. They also led students to mobilize, which created a context where the institution might feel pressure to act.

At another college, Carmen noted that the election and ensuing court battles over DACA brought awareness to other institutional leaders and made it more difficult for them to ask, "Why are you doing this?" She noted, "When they see Trump, [DACA] is in the Supreme Court, the California courts, the Texas courts. Then they say 'okay.'" Bringing awareness to the needs of undocumented students created a context where individuals were more likely to take actions that they felt were risky before the election of Trump. Carmen illustrated how these events increased the visibility of the issue for campus leadership, but the election also catalyzed participants who may not have taken action before. For example, Lorena was a student services staff member at her college and said,

> I bit my tongue a lot before Trump got elected because I thought, 'Well, that's not the space. I shouldn't say that.' But then I became pretty open after Trump was elected. I was like, 'I don't care anymore; our students need this space." What I saw the day after the election was how defeated our students were, how defeated we felt– like "we'd come so

> far, and now this is happening?" So I let a lot of barriers down and was very vulnerable with my students…when I was in [a different position on campus], like I didn't realize that it was a thing.

Lorena did not see it as her role to talk about the hostile environment for undocumented students before the election of Trump mostly because she did not understand the extent of the fear students and their families were experiencing. After the election she noticed that students were afraid of traveling to visit potential transfer colleges and that their families were scared to attend their graduations. The election made it difficult to ignore that her undocumented students needed a safe space and safe practitioners to talk to about the issues.

The rescission of DACA also catalyzed the implementation of new services already underway but moving slowly. Carlos noted that the plans for a soft launch of campus training changed when, in September 2017, the Trump administration rescinded DACA.

> All through the presidential election of 2016, the narrative around immigrants and undocumented students was just horrible. And then, with Trump attempting to rescind DACA, that just kind of pushed the work we needed to do forward. And so instead of that soft launch, we did a really hard launch doing four trainings in that Fall semester. And that put undocumented student issues at the forefront, at least at our institution.

Ultimately, Carlos summarized why the election of Trump and the rescission of DACA were episodic events that provided opportunities for individuals to take new action to support undocumented students. He noted that DACA and immigration issues were in the news throughout Trump's tenure as President, making undocumented students topical: "When something is topical, it's easy to help move things forward, especially when it's topical for all the wrong reasons, right?" Ignoring a student population is a common tempered resistance by actors.

However, because undocumented students were visible, they were difficult to ignore. This change contributed to the visibility of the undocumented student issue and the opportunity to act for change.

All participants who mentioned the election saw it as directly opening up opportunities. However, that did not mean that the election of Trump and his hostile immigration rhetoric did not temper action in other ways. The rhetoric engaged by President Trump in many ways echoed and reinforced the conservative right-wing political stances, polarizing the nation in terms of immigration. For many participants, the election added to the feeling that undocumented student support was a political issue that came with much risk. At one campus, a participant (Felipe) described undocumented student issues on campus as a “political hot-potato.” The grant funds they received to spend on undocumented student support went unspent for a year because they had trouble finding people who would take responsibility for spending the funds. Felipe believed that practitioners did not want to make themselves potential targets for very organized right-wing groups in the area who were targeting the college.

Another practitioner, Hector, noted that the politicization of undocumented student support also stifled leadership support: “Sometimes I think it's fear, that the administration fears very publicly saying we support the students. They just think it’s too political. That kind of attitudinal blockage prevents us from having institutional changes that will cater to the needs of our students.” Hector also shared an experience in the academic senate that involved passing a resolution supporting undocumented students when Trump won the presidential election. He believes the resolution should have been a simple task for the academic senate, given that no funding was attached.

> An endless conversation ensued. People questioning what was going to happen with [the resolution]; why we were trying to create a resolution in support of undocumented students when it should already be a default assumption and belief across our campus; What would it mean in terms of our funding. So that's a really good example of a time when something so simple, so human, and ethical could have been accepted and validated for just the sake of what it was. It was not. It turned into something political and divisive, and it became a conversation that didn't take us anywhere.

The "Trump effect" is currently understood as something experienced by undocumented students and their families. However, the practitioners in this study highlight that there was also a "Trump effect" on practitioners at all levels of the community college that both created opportunities for change and tempered action.

Funding from Immigrants Rising and the CCCCO. Two major funding events became available to CCCs in the last five years. These funding opportunities were episodic events because they changed the possibilities for undocumented student support. The first was a grant from a community organization called Immigrants Rising. It came from a grant-making initiative called the Catalyst Fund for California's three public higher education systems. Colleges that applied and received funding got an average of $125,000 (Year 1), $115,000 (Year 2), and $105,000 (Year 3) provided directly to campuses. This money was intended to seed "new or nascent efforts to serve undocumented students" (Immigrants Rising, 2022). Of the 27 participants, 11 mentioned the Catalyst grant.

The second funding event resulted from California's Assembly Bill 1645, which requires that all 115 CCCs have a Dreamer Resource Liaison who can be a point person for support. The policy also specifies that the state reimburses campuses for this mandate. This state decision was

a significant event because it effectively institutionalized at least one position for undocumented students. Twelve of the 27 participants mentioned AB1645 funding from the state for a Dreamer's liaison.

It may come as no surprise that these events changed the context for action within community colleges. For colleges that had little to no services or support for undocumented students on campus, this changed the landscape. These opportunities provided additional funding for colleges that already had services and support. The practitioners in the study noted that those funds were used to open USRCs (n=5), full-time (n=4), and part-time staff (n=7), and other programming (n=6). Each of these opportunities has the potential to lead to many more actions because of the additional capacity and the added structures that support sustainable practice.

Although receiving this funding created the opportunity for many important actions, it also did not always contribute to a permanent positive context for action. Practitioners noted the difficulties of sustaining the changes that materialized from this funding. For practitioners who did not have a plan, compromises had to be made. For most of the practitioners who indicated they used the funds to hire staff, many indicated that they hired part-time staff instead of full-time despite feeling that they needed full-time staff. Daniel said he needed sustainable funding to hire more full-time practitioners to institutionalize undocumented student support. He talked about what it means to have an unsustained funding source, "We do have these two grants, but they are ending, you know? Some folks say just use this [Catalyst/Chancellor's Office] money for now. So, we are just delaying this by a year or a year and a half, you know? But we've got to have a plan."

Bernardo (counselor) had a similar observation, noting that the chancellor's office's funding helped his leadership to hire a new part-time staff member at the undocumented student

program to share the workload, "We really needed the capacity to serve the [undocumented] student population that we had. I mean, we still do because none of us are working full-time for the program. All of us are still kind of working part-time for it." He returned to this point later in the interview: "I feel like having dedicated full-time staff that works on this for our program would also create a sense of stability for the program and students so that they know they can reach out to us." Despite receiving funding from the chancellor's office to help increase the capacity for supporting undocumented students, it was not enough to provide sustainable change. The financial investment and human resource capacity did not yet provide a favorable context for change.

Fears about unsustained funding were not unfounded. Ana explicitly mentioned ending a program when the Catalyst funds ran out: "We were able to do [a program] for two years, and we had support. But this year, we didn't do it because we could not find the money. Especially since this was our first year without the Catalyst budget." When the Catalyst funds were available, other campus areas could pool their funding to make up the difference needed to run the program. When the Catalyst funds source of funding the program also lost support from other areas of campus. Losing these resources tempers action in the long run despite providing a window of opportunity.

COVID-19 Pandemic. The final episodic event of note was the global COVID-19 pandemic, which impacted all higher education institutions when stay-at-home orders moved most in-person learning and support into an online context. The COVID-19 pandemic disproportionately impacted communities of color and other minoritized communities like undocumented students (DeLuca-Acconi, Bessaha, Velázquez, & Mendoza, 2022). Scholars have already documented the economic (Enriquez, Rosales, & Valadez, 2021), mental health

(Andrade, 2022; Ro, Rodriguez, & Enriquez, 2021), and physical health (McFadden, Demeke, Dada, Wilton, Wang, Vlahov, & Nelson, 2022; Ro et al., 2021) impacts of COVID-19 on undocumented college students. Given the breadth of the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, it may come as no surprise that 18 of the 27 participants mentioned the event—the most of any episodic event.

I start with how COVID-19 tempered action because more practitioners mentioned COVID-19 as detrimental to action than creating opportunities. For Carlos, COVID-19 hit at a bad time. Carlos noted, "When we hit the height of our work, COVID-19 hit, which put a wrench in everything." COVID-19 tempered action for practitioners for several reasons.

First, the pandemic caused a drop in enrollments at community colleges generally, and this was particularly so for undocumented students. This enrollment decline made it difficult for programs to continue operating and fundraising for a dwindling group of students: "The data is showing that a lot of [undocumented] students are dropping out right now." That made it difficult to stay visible. In addition to dropping out entirely, Carlos noted that keeping the undocumented students who stayed engaged also became a challenge. "We're working hard just to keep the students that we have–to keep them in school and moving forward." Xiomara was a counselor who had a similar issue at her community college: "We have the undocumented week of action. That's usually where we try to engage the students, all the students, the faculty, and the general college. We haven't found a way yet to do it online." Lower undocumented student enrollment, trouble engaging the undocumented students who stayed, and the other many issues COVID-19 presented for community colleges meant priorities shifted for some of the practitioners' colleges.

This was as true for Carlos as it was for Daniel, his counterpart at another institution: "I'm spending time on, not just developing more programs and services, especially

now remotely, but also trying to secure funding to institutionalize our center and other centers. Because with budget deficits and the pandemic, it's a harder conversation to have." The pandemic, therefore, opened the door for tempered resistance because it upheld the common higher education discourse that suggests giving additional resources and support to undocumented students might take away resources from other minoritized groups or the general student population during a time when resources felt very limited. During a time when college leaders emphasized that every student was experiencing hardship from the pandemic, practitioners found it difficult to make the case that undocumented students needed additional resources.

Despite the actual negative impact of the pandemic on undocumented students and their families and the ways they tempered action, five practitioners also mentioned how the pandemic created opportunities for action. Two of those practitioners mentioned the additional funding provided by the Cares Act (S. 3548, 2020). When Congress passed the Cares Act to "provide fast and direct economic assistance to American workers, families, small businesses, and industries," the policy excluded aid to undocumented students. California community colleges sued the education department for denying these funds to undocumented students and other student populations that did not submit the FAFSA and won.

Dario noted that this allowed for the implementation of structures, like the emergency aid application that made it easier to get direct aid to students: "We have a pretty robust emergency aid application, which has been very – it's a good lifeline for some of these students. Many colleges set that up because of COVID-19 or through COVID-19 funding from the state and the federal government." Mayra also noted that COVID-19 emergency funds opened up opportunities: "The first set of [COVID-19 emergency relief] dollars did not include

undocumented students, but [leadership] used [their] position to say COVID-19 has no boundaries, and it opened up the next phase for undocumented support."

COVID-19 upended the way that community colleges operated. Brenda noted that this was an opportunity to take advantage of building new systems from the bottom up: "Now that COVID-19 has changed the face of education, we are having to change how we operate. Within this systemic flip, these conversations [about undocumented students] can be automatically included, not a leftover." The COVID-19 pandemic showed how quickly higher education could respond to a need by changing how it operated. These conversations would push the institution toward an understanding of serving all students equitably.

While many struggled with the change in how things operated, such as moving everything online, one counselor, Xiomara, noted the positive: "Our task force really came or grew stronger in the last two years when we were in confinement because we were able to meet more. We were able to meet consistently. Even though it was on Zoom, we were more consistent. We had more people that joined." Therefore, a few participants were able to take advantage of the way COVID-19 dramatically changed the way higher education did business. COVID-19 contributed to a context where there was more financial investment in undocumented students and an opportunity to create new discourse and practice for serving undocumented students equitably.

6.2.2 Organizational Factors Contributing to Adverse and Favorable Contexts

Several organizational factors contributed to the components that shaped practitioners' adverse and favorable contexts for action in support of undocumented students. We explore the constraints and opportunities presented by the local sociopolitical context of the institutions, the

existing institutionalized support, formal practitioner groups, perspectives on institutional leadership, and data structures and discourses.

Local Socio-Political Contexts as Constraining the Ability to Sell Undocumented Student Issues. Despite the shared state and national socio-political context of the CCCs in Southern California, the 16 institutions where the participants of this study worked were still varied in terms of the more local socio-political contexts. These local communities were each responding to the national discourse and policy in different ways, and nearly a third of the participants representing eight of the sixteen colleges noted the local context of their colleges and how they shaped the actions they were or were not able to take in support of undocumented students. Participants described the local community context as conservative or progressive and, at times, pointed to other factors, such as the demographics of their local community.

Six of the practitioners mentioned the conservative context of their institutions. Similar to the larger national context, the local context also amplified the feeling that undocumented student support was a political issue that was risky to engage in for the college or individuals. However, while practitioners discussed the state and national political context as a catalyzing force, more suggested local contexts as a tempering force. In particular, the local context made it challenging to discuss undocumented student issues and find solutions. In Chapter 4 I discussed what practitioners did to “sell” actions to others. These conservative contexts heightened the perception that it was challenging to sell undocumented student issues and solutions as important, whether to the community, to leadership, to other college practitioners, or even to undocumented students on their campuses.

April and Xiomara were at two different community colleges in communities that they described as conservative. They each mentioned in their interviews that living in these

conservative communities was a major reason they believed their services for undocumented students were "just starting" and behind other peer community colleges (April and Xiomara's colleges had the least available services and support for undocumented students). April believed it was "bizarre" that in 2022, the college did not have any program for undocumented students. Her institution's sister college down the road had existing institutionalized support. The difference was the immediate community context despite the proximity of the campuses. April added, "We're in a very conservative community. We understand that a lot of these students may come in with a little bit of fear or distrust. We want to make sure that we let them know that if they are undocumented, that they are safe, that we're not going to be distributing their information." Under this context, students were afraid to disclose their undocumented status and ask questions to college practitioners (particularly staff in critical departments like admissions and financial aid). Without undocumented students voicing their needs and questions, their presence on campus continued to be invisible, and undocumented issues were not apparent or made a priority.

Furthermore, for Xiomara, Mark, and Sonia, the local context made practitioners and leaders "uncomfortable" or "hesitant" to speak out about undocumented student issues. The context made practitioners want to maintain a less visible presence on campus. Xiomara noted, "Not having a [USRC], is a good idea right now. I don't know how well it will be received by the community. The district in general, it's still conservative. I don't know how the community will take it." This heightened the risk of engaging in undocumented student issues and lessened the visibility of these issues, again creating a context in which it is difficult to frame these issues as a priority.

There was one standout campus concerning the socio-political context. The two practitioners whom I talked to about this campus spoke about the highly organized right-wing organizations in the community that were supporting on-campus right-wing groups to actively undermine the support of undocumented students using the same negative narratives. These participants noted that the political climate created a hostile environment where many practitioners, from leadership to faculty, felt they had to watch what they said. One participant noted, “I remember talking to [the President], and they said just be aware when you write your comments that the Republicans will be tuning in. So, I crafted a politically tepid statement, but that I thought was important.” This stand-out example was a more obvious example of the silencing and feelings of risk that all practitioners mentioned conservative local contexts experienced. These local political contexts contribute to what practitioners perceive they can and cannot do or say and what they prioritize on their campus.

Existing Institutionalized Support as Advancing Opportunity and the Status Quo. Practitioners discussed how past changes and institutionalized support catalyzed other actions. To give an idea of the past changes and institutionalized support at the colleges, I have indicated the 16 institutions and where they fall on a spectrum of least services offered to most services offered. The types of support offered to undocumented students varied widely among the 16 institutional contexts in the data. Table 5 indicates common types of institutionalized support for undocumented students. I created this list of undocumented student services and support using a combination of what previous literature has identified as essential aspects of undocumented student support at colleges and universities (see Cisneros & Rivarola, 2020; Ngo & Hinojosa, 2021; Southern, 2016) and what interviewees identified as important aspects of support at their institutions. The list of services and support includes an on-campus

Figure 5

Types of Services and Support at the Participants' Community Colleges

College #	USRC	Student Group/Club	Formal Practitioner Group	On Campus Legal Services	Workshops and Events	Dedicated Counselor	Ally Trainings	Total Services and Supports
1		x		x	x			3
2		x	x	x	x	x	x	6
3		x	x	x	x		x	5
4	x		x	x	x		x	5
5	x		x	x	x	x	x	6
6	x	x		x	x	x	x	6
7					x	x		2
8	x		x	x	x		x	5
9	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	7
10				x	x	x	x	4
11		x	x	x	x	x	x	6
12			x	x	x			3
13	x			x	x	x	x	5
14	x			x	x	x	x	5
15	x			x	x	x	x	5
16	x	x		x	x		x	5
Total # of Colleges	9	7	8	15	16	10	13	-

undocumented student resource center, student group/club, formal work group comprised of college employees, on-campus legal services, workshops and events, a dedicated counselor, and Undocu-ally training hosted and led by the institution.

As mentioned, USRCs are on-campus physical spaces where undocumented students can ask for help, which serve as the central hub for most other services. Of the participants' 16 colleges, seven did not have USRCs, and nine had USRCs. Among the group of institutions that had USRCs, two colleges were among the first to open their USRCs in 2015. The others followed with one institution opening its USRC in 2017, one in 2018, one in 2019, and four in 2021. Note that these USRC's may differ in personnel and physical size. Some are merged with other support programs for other groups (e.g., foster youth, formerly incarcerated students, EOPS). However, I did not include whether the USRC was merged with other programs or had its own office, given the variety of definitions of merged or unmerged and the difficulty in parsing this information from the documents and interviews.

Undocumented student clubs and formal work groups of administrators, faculty, or staff (e.g., task force, committee, etc.) were present at the fewest colleges, with seven and eight colleges, respectively. On-campus legal assistance and general informational workshops and events were present at most colleges. All but one college did not have on-campus legal assistance, and all 16 colleges had workshops and events for undocumented students, especially during the yearly Undocumented Student Week of Action held in October all over the state. The prevalence of legal assistance may be because of the several immigration legal organizations that have taken the initiative to build partnerships with and offer services for willing community colleges for free or low cost. Workshops and other events also vary in the degree to which they are institutionalized. Workshops are often organized and led by one or a few practitioners with

no formal responsibilities supporting undocumented students (Southern, 2016). Ten colleges had a counselor with time explicitly dedicated to undocumented students, and thirteen colleges indicated having an ongoing Undocu-ally training hosted and led by college employees.

One of the 16 colleges indicated having all of the seven services and support types. Seven colleges indicated having five of the types of services and support. The college with the lowest number of services and support had a dedicated counselor, workshops, and events. Interestingly, the four colleges with the least number of services and support (2-4) did not have a USRC. Six out of the seven colleges with five of the services and support had a USRC. However, two colleges had all the services and support except the USRC.

Practitioners of these particular types of support indicate USRCs and formal practitioner groups as good catalysts for further action. In the following section, we explore what practitioners said about the opportunities that USRCs and formal practitioner groups afforded the undocumented student cause. We will also explore how the constraints of USRCs and formal practitioner groups may continue to perpetuate the status quo operations of the college.

A USRC is a critical symbol of institutionalization of undocumented student support, given that a college must provide—at the very least— a physical space and at least one staff member. A USRC is a significant investment for community colleges and promotes additional opportunities for change. Denise emphasized the importance of these investments: "[Establishing a USRC] was important. Whoever plugged that in [to the grant] was key to ensuring that the services would be sustainable." Staff is one aspect of USRCs that increases capacity for action.

In addition to providing additional capacity for student-facing work, there is an increased opportunity for organizational learning and change. Nicholas was a director with no formal responsibilities supporting the undocumented student population. He mentioned opening a

USRC on his campus as increasing the capacity for student-facing work similar to those practitioners above: “We have our very first USRC, of which there's a director, and there's classified staff and counselors dedicated to supporting undocumented students on campus.” However, Nicholas added, “[The task force] has been able to shift from the work and support for that student population, and we've divided into two components: The specific student-centered focus resources that are available through the USRC, and the employee component, which the task force is responsible for.” Before the opening of the USRC, a task force made up of college employees from across the college felt responsible for providing more direct support and resources to students and professional development for their peers to become more informed about undocumented student issues. Once the USRC opened, it provided time for USRC and task force practitioners to focus on one population—the employees or the students. This focus meant there was more time, attention, and capacity to address undocumented support from two population angles.

Carlos talked about the USRC at his campus, which was set to open up a few months after our interview: “There will be space assigned to the DREAM center even though it won’t be a stand-alone place for undocumented students, but it’s still something better than what we had now in terms of space.” He talked about what having a USRC could open up the possibilities for, given his prior work at a USRC:

> I used to be the coordinator for [a USRC] at another college where the space felt like the biggest draw for students because they found communities. They don’t have that at [this college]...there’s no way for them to build that community. A lot of our students feel like they’re on their own, like they’re the only undocumented students on campus, which is not the case. But they wouldn’t know that with our current setup.

For Carlos, having a USRC allows undocumented students to build that community. Therefore, the location of the USRC was vital for maintaining visibility for undocumented students and institutional leadership.

Building an undocumented student community is undoubtedly a positive outcome for undocumented student support in and of itself. However, having a more visible undocumented student community can also create a better context for action. Denise noted, "[Our USRC] is in the heart of Student Services. I think that was also key to us, like not being on a corner of the campus, but being at the center of the campus, regardless of what the space square footage looks like." Whether it was capacity or visibility, USRCs may set college practitioners up for future actions supporting undocumented students.

USRCs are overwhelmingly seen as a positive for undocumented students' success and the sustainability of support. However, some practitioners did share concerns. The first concern was that USRCs run the risk of becoming the only spaces where undocumented students can receive support and feel safe. Daniel noted how this diffusion of responsibility could occur: "We can have a [USRC], but if undocumented students are going to financial aid or business services and they're getting negative messages, then that doesn't help. We cannot be the island where students come in and safeguard them from everything." In a context where the responsibility for undocumented student support lies only with the USRC, actions for systemic change might be more challenging.

The second concern was that these spaces are so diluted by a need to serve all minoritized student populations that it would be an inadequate solution to undocumented student issues. For example, Hector talked about his perception of a proposed general social justice center: "Under a bigger umbrella of social justice that I think it's sometimes kind of amalgamated, homogenized

their experiences with other social justice student issues. That is not enough." As we noted above, Carlos, who was also at Hector's college, also lamented not having a space just for undocumented students even though he felt it was a step in the right direction. At another campus, Lorena was similarly disappointed by the general equity center, "An equity center is great, but I really want a DREAM center. I feel like that specific space where [undocumented students] can own their identity is just so important rather than put them with everyone else."

For these practitioners, investing in a USRC that did not adequately support undocumented students specifically would create a potentially adverse context for change where an institution might point to these changes as proof of commitment and success without attending to the actual impact on undocumented students. Jennifer illustrated this form of tempered resistance. When she wanted to implement additional campus changes in support of undocumented students, that change was stifled by the leadership's perception that a USRC should have solved all of the undocumented students' problems. Jennifer indicated receiving the message, "Well, you have the [USRC]." She noted the USRC was not enough: "But it's like, there is more than just having a space, there is more that's needed."

Formal Practitioner Groups as Collective Action or Garbage Can. Formal practitioner groups were another type of support for undocumented students that opened many new opportunities for future change. Thirteen practitioners at nine institutions mentioned a formal group of practitioners on campus. These groups were labeled as task forces, committees, networks, work groups, or advocacy groups. I deemed these formal groups because they had members, a structure, and a purpose for undocumented students. This was in contrast to informal groups, which did not have a clear membership, structure for coming together, or formal purpose.

Formal practitioner groups come the closest to collective action on the spectrum of action. These groups are places where practitioners with shared values for undocumented student success could collectively and strategically organize (often from the grassroots up) to provide solutions to the issues facing undocumented students. However, in addition to the actions taken to create these groups, they also play a role in the context for action.

Formal groups may have a structure, but that structure varies. The result is varying potential for expanding opportunities to serve undocumented students through different purposes and strengths. Southern (2016) posited that grassroots leaders leveraged task forces at four-year institutions to find resources for undocumented students. He stated, "The legitimacy of an institutional task force may then open opportunities to incorporate undocumented student services as a part of formally assigned job descriptions and garner financial and other resources." (p. 313). There is a real opportunity for action in building relationships with other practitioners who share values and passion for undocumented student support and success. For the participants in this study, these opportunities touched upon many of the seven components of the context for change– including expanding the visibility of undocumented student issues, increasing the capacity for providing resources to students and practitioners at the college among colleagues whom they know care about the issues, providing opportunities for strategic advocacy which could change the discourse on undocumented students and lessen the risk for support, and collectively garnering financial resources to support their efforts.

Especially when undocumented student issues are not at the forefront of social consciousness, formal practitioner groups can ensure that everyday problems at the institution are met with collective solutions. Remember that Xiomara was at a campus with very little

institutionalized support. However, her college did recently gather get a task force for undocumented student issues. She noted the importance of the support of the task force.

> The biggest change right now is this task force. Just three years ago, we didn't have anything. We would just sometimes talk like, "We have some undocumented students, and they're having problems." Nobody would do anything about it. Just having this task force, I think it's a big improvement for our students. Just having the conversation.

Having a formal group discussing undocumented student issues can provide visibility and prompt collective action in ways unavailable to individuals acting independently.

The formal practitioner group provided an educational space where practitioners could increase their capacity, or the capacity of others, to work with undocumented students. They were also networking spaces where practitioners could offer the resources and skills to the rest of the group. The task force that Xiomara was part of encompassed both of those purposes. “That's the task force's goal: to educate the faculty as to who [undocumented] students are, what kind of challenges they face, and to send them to the right people, to us, to the services we offer.” The professional group brought together individuals interested in undocumented student support and lessened the potential risk of working with others.

In addition to being a group with different resources to offer undocumented students, formal groups were also a space to increase capacity by offering each other support with tasks. For example, Nicholas stated,

> If I'm leading an event, [the committee members] support me and the logistical pieces; the development of the flyer, the contact, any contracts, and in reverse, if by any chance we go into the next month, the classified representative will be the lead. Then, the faculty and I will be a support for that person.

As previously stated, Nicholas's position does not involve directly supporting undocumented students. The formal group becomes a space where he can practice his commitment to supporting undocumented students outside his formal role.

Formal groups also served as a space to strategically place advocates across the college. Alicia was a counselor who might not have a voice in the academic senate were it not for the advocate group. She noted, "Our advocate group has very close ties with our academic senate. That's where we try to voice our opinions and go through them to help us advocate for whatever issues we see and want to advocate for." This advocacy increased the visibility of undocumented student issues and ensured that undocumented student support was on the agenda across the college. Martin experienced something similar at his institution: "They were very strategic in creating this group, so there are a lot of partners across campus who can leverage their power because of their role. So, they would go into our classified and faculty senate and advocate for specific resources and services."

The formal advocacy group also translated into additional funding for Martin because the group members partnered with their local CSU campus to apply for the Catalyst Fund. Martin was not the only one who mentioned financial resources due to the formal groups. For Lorena, the task force acted as a collective fundraising body. "We did a lot of fundraising. We all put a lot of money out of our own pockets and put them into the foundation account to award scholarships to our [undocumented] students." Through these networks, practitioners can organize to fund their work and other initiatives for undocumented students across campus.

Despite the prevalence of the opportunities afforded by the formal practitioner groups, practitioners still had grievances connected to them. These grievances suggest that formal practitioner groups are still limited in enacting organizational change for undocumented students.

Instead of catalyzing action for change, there were three ways that formal practitioner groups continued to serve the status quo.

First, participants noted that despite having clear membership and purpose, none of the formal groups received compensation for their work. Nicholas says, “There's no release time for any of [the leaders]. We basically do it just out of like the kindness of our heart and our passion for creating those spaces.” Lorena had a similar narrative: “I went to this ally training, and said I want to be part of this group. It’s all outside of my work’s scope. I don’t get paid for it. It’s all additional volunteer stuff, but it fed my soul.” Despite formal practitioner groups having visibility and permission from the institution, none of the practitioners received formal compensation or had their positions changed to reflect their role with undocumented students. These limitations were telling of the lack of financial investment and the diffusion of responsibility that plagued the contexts for change for undocumented students.

Second, for the formal practitioner groups without leading decision-makers in their ranks, it was difficult to know whether their recommendations led to any institutionalized change. Lorena described not knowing why recommendations made by the advisory committee did not seem to go anywhere. “I don’t know how. It just doesn’t move forward or [the administrative leadership] have other things on their plates.” Despite the advocates' group “being very vocal about things” going to different meetings on campus or to the board of trustees, Lorena was frustrated by not knowing where recommendations to hire staff had fallen through the cracks as it made its way up the decision-making hierarchy at her college. “I just don’t know where it is right now, where it stands. The last thing I heard we're going to hire a counselor. That was back in February, and we haven't seen an announcement. It's now June, no announcement.”

In Lorena's narrative, the advocates group effectively brought practitioner groups together to make recommendations. However, these practitioner groups were not part of the college's decision-making processes. This narrative is an example of tempered resistance; when decision-makers do not communicate the status of the group's recommendations, it stagnates action and makes practitioners unable to enact change.

The third way formal practitioners can serve the status quo is by being another source of diffusion of responsibility. Given her experience in formal practitioner groups at two colleges, Barbara spoke to this at length. In her prior institutions, she felt the formal practitioner group was a space for everyone to contribute their work to support undocumented students: "At [another college] I feel like everybody had a role: You're going to share what you're doing here; What trends are you seeing amongst your students." She recounted the questions she asked the group at her former institution about building the capacity in their areas to work with undocumented students. These questions included "What support do you need from me if you have any undocumented students? How can I go into your office and train your staff? How can I go into the academic senate and train your faculty? It felt more like a team at [another college]."

This culture was in contrast to Barbara's current college, where, as I noted in a previous section, she felt the responsibility to support undocumented students was not shared with the group's different campus areas. Rather, the responsibility of supporting undocumented students falls with one person. Rather than involve everyone in supporting undocumented students, she felt that this group was more simply about keeping people informed about what the main institutional support staff were doing: "At this college, the coordinator dictates what they will talk about. It's very like 'I'm going to do X, what questions do you have?,' 'What resources do you have that I can share with my students,' and 'Can I send them to you if they come to me with

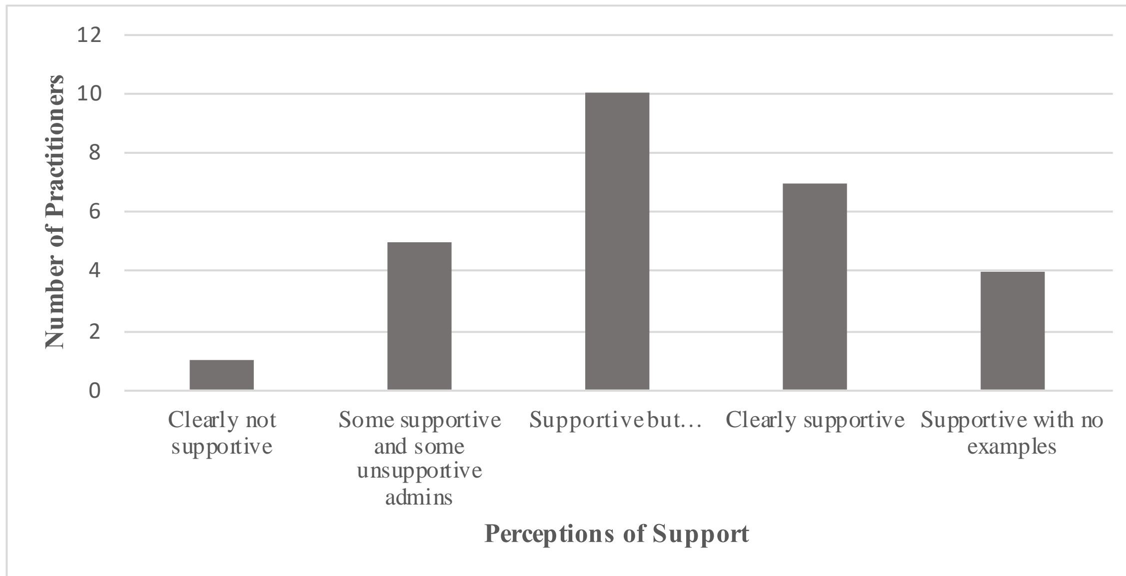
a question about your resource.'" This type of formal practitioner group is more about making the members aware of the support that undocumented students receive from a small group of undocumented student liaisons. It also exacerbates the idea that supports lives with a few individuals at the institution and not with practitioners in every campus area. This may continue the negative interactions that undocumented students experience in many areas on campus because practitioners in those areas do not feel it is their responsibility to understand the specific barriers undocumented students face.

Campus Leadership. It may come as no surprise that the support of administrative campus leadership can make or break campus efforts for change. There is general agreement among higher education scholars that the role of administrative leaders is pivotal to the success of equity and social justice change efforts (Bensimon & Neumann, 1993; Kezar & Lester, 2009; Taylor & Ambriz, 2022). Administrative leaders have the potential to create positive contexts for change that is amenable to undocumented student support (Andrade & Lundberg, 2022; Nienhusser, 2017). However, in a higher education landscape riddled with multiple challenges, not all administrators prioritize undocumented student success. The participants in this study talked about the ways that institutional administrative leadership supported change efforts or inhibited them. I refer to practitioners by their role rather than their pseudonyms in this section to provide additional confidentiality regarding practitioners' more negative views toward particular leading decision-makers at their college.

Figure 5 shows how many participants described the support of their college's administrative leadership. The responses fell into five categories. The first category is *clearly not supportive*. One practitioner described administrative leaders as not supportive. This faculty member stated, "[The executive administrators] just don't want to invest in [undocumented

Figure 6

Practitioners' Perceptions of Executive Administrative Support



student] programs because they think that it's going to take away from the budget that is allocated to so many other different things on campus." When administrators did make gestures of support, such as releasing a statement following the recission of DACA, this faculty member perceived this as "lip service"—a performative show of support for undocumented students when they felt pressured by counselors and deans. He perceived real consequences due to this lack of support: "I am really sad to say a couple of [allies] are leaving after this year because the institution has essentially pushed them out. Through a lack of support and a lack of validation of what they do on a daily basis." This participant only had negative things to say about the support of administrative leadership.

Five participants stated that they had the support of some administrative leaders and that others were unsupportive. For example, this staff member noted:

> If I think about the president, I will say no, I don't see enough support from the board of trustees or the president. But starting with the vice president of student services and all the coordinators, I see more support. They are more responsive to all that we do.

To this participant, being responsive meant being involved with the USRC, attending meetings and events, and being aware of practitioners' work on campus to support undocumented students. It was clear to her that some administrators made the effort and cared, while others did not.

Seven practitioners noted administrative leaders who were *clearly supportive*. These practitioners provided examples of this support. For example, one director described one vice president as "a wordsmith," "enlightened," and "an ally through and through." This director perceived the role of this vice president was to provide the "tools, culture, and support" that would enable areas of campus such as admissions and financial aid to service undocumented students adequately.

Another example came from an administrator who spoke about the support he received from the vice president and president of his college: Our vice president of student services was able to secure CARES Act funding for undocumented students." He continued, "I was at a meeting with the president on Tuesday, and before I or others said anything, he said, 'Hey we've got to allocate some funding for our [USRC] because we need to support this population.'" The vice president and president were both involved and proactive about finding funding to support undocumented students.

Interestingly, most comments about administrators fell under the third category that I called *supportive but.* Ten practitioner responses fell under this category because they would explicitly state that administrative leadership or specific leaders were supportive, but rather than

following up with examples of that support, they would follow up with the ways that administrative support still fell short–usually in the form of a "but…". For example, one undocumented student support staff said: "I do think all of [the administrators] are supportive of undocumented students, *but* [emphasis added] I think everyone does it very carefully." A counselor shared, "I feel like our college is supportive *but* [emphasis added] I feel like there are so many other things that run the college like the numbers and it's hard to get numbers." In each of these comments, the practitioners have stated that there is support but what support looks like is unclear. These practitioners did not define what support looked like but clearly stated the ways that support is lacking (i.e. being careful in expressing support, only providing support when data conditions are met). In each of these examples, support falls short.

Some practitioners were clearer about how leadership support was symbolic but did not translate into material practice. For example, one counselor said of the president:

> If we talk about higher-up administrators, like going up to the president. They'll say yeah, we support undocumented students, *but* [emphasis added] you know, that's kind of the right thing to say…there's goodwill I guess in people, *but* [emphasis added] I feel there really hasn't been anything to back it up.

Here, support is communicating the message that "we support undocumented students." However, inaction leads them to suggest that the support is insufficient.

Another practitioner noted that her president was "doing what the community college system is asking her to do" by implementing the Chancellor's office changes to support undocumented students. However, she also communicated that the measure of her president's support was inaccurate.

I will distinguish. Our president has shown support. If you look at it, you're like, "oh, she's neutral," *But* [emphasis added] I don't think there's any vocal support. She's never visited the center in the five years the center's been open. She was invited to a panel. She didn't go

This practitioner expressed that she did not think the executive leadership cared enough to act for undocumented students, instead doing the "bare minimum"– "what they are required to do." In these examples, practitioners define support as being able to vocalize support for undocumented students and implement the policies of the Chancellor's Office but still make it clear how these shows of support fall short. It matters to this counselor that the president is not responsive to requests to be at events or visit the space. This lack of clarity leads to the perception that the college's leadership does not care about undocumented student issues, which makes it more challenging to act in support and find opportunities for change to bring up to leadership.

Other practitioners fell under the "supportive but…" category without communicating it as succinctly as the practitioners above. For example, another counselor stated:

Our administration is still very conservative. We know we've got their support. Otherwise, they would've said, "No task force for this," or "What are you doing with this task force?" We know that there's support for us to talk about the problem…Right now, I think if they were really supporting it, they would say, "We're going to allocate some money for undocumented students, or for programming, or for a center."

Another way of saying this is, "they support because they have not stopped the task force, *but* there is no sustainable financial support or commitment." Again, the participant communicated that the support does not go far enough. Appendix C provides these "supportive but" examples and more. In these cases, a piecemeal or "bandaid" show of support has the potential to stifle

change in support of undocumented students if administrators claim to support, but do so in ways that do not translate into action and maintains the status quo.

The preponderance of the *supportive but* category highlights community college leadership's tempered resistance to undocumented student support. Despite describing many instances in which community college leadership was not supportive of undocumented students and practitioners' efforts to support them, it was difficult for most participants to describe them as unsupportive because these were inconspicuous actions or inactions that fell within appropriate organizational norms.

Department Structures and Cultures. Practitioners frequently mentioned departments or offices relevant to undocumented student issues on their campus. Among the most frequently mentioned or notable departments or offices within these community colleges were financial aid (n=22), admissions (n=9), counseling (n=8), information technology (n=5), and the nursing department (n=3). These departments offered opportunities for change or created barriers depending on the department's structure, whether participants felt they had a partnership with these areas of campus, or whether issues reported by undocumented students were addressed or ignored.

Participants identified the financial aid and admissions departments as critical for supporting undocumented students through the unique application and financial aid processes necessary to enroll in the institution and receive financial support successfully. Practitioners discussed how these departments posed barriers to change when they did not change their structures or practices to support students. For example, Bernardo was a counselor at his college and had heard firsthand about the issues with financial aid: "Financial aid is probably the biggest issue that students come and ask questions about. We're not the financial aid office, but they're

not getting, you know, responses from the financial aid office.” He described why it was difficult for the financial aid office to provide information for undocumented students:

> “They also are limited in capacity I should say too. So It’s not just a matter of not wanting to change, but they have one person who does the California DREAM Act applications, and that’s it. That’s a lot of work for one person, and he also has to do other things, so that’s not his only responsibility.”

This departmental structure contributes to a diffusion of responsibility where one person bears the burden of undocumented student support. Bernardo seems to believe that the capacity limitation is not something that the financial aid office can change. It is a taken-for-granted material practice that only one or a few financial aid counselors would serve undocumented students’ financial aid needs. The department creates the capacity issue by not providing a structure to give all financial aid counselors the responsibility to serve undocumented students.

Brenda addressed the structures that, she argued, make financial aid and admissions offices adverse to change:

> Admissions, by nature, is a very conservative office because they are audited yearly, internally and externally both by state and federal offices because of the funding. Not just funding, but that financial aid also predicates on the enrollment in classes. In order for financial aid to fund that student, financial aid has to verify with admissions that that student is in fact enrolled at “x” number of units, did not drop, did not fail. These are all the pieces. While we would say financial aid is the most auditable office, it is, but they're built on admissions. Admissions is governed by [California Education Code].

Brenda is pointing to what drives material practice in admissions and financial aid departments. The admission department prioritizes work that aligns with their state and federal auditing needs

and the California education code. Brenda noted “[The admissions department’s] approach to access and equity is mixed across colleges.” This is because the education code does not direct admissions on how to address equity issues like serving undocumented students. In this context the status quo is unlikely to create meaningful changes for undocumented students because there is no incentive to change current practice. It becomes very easy for departments to engage in tempered resistance by making no changes to the way they do business and can do so without consequences. Change for undocumented students, therefore, relies on individuals with decision-making power within these departments who understand the needs of undocumented students and care to implement new practices within the culture and structure of these departments.

Departmental inaction can set a difficult context for action, especially if that department is crucial to the change effort. For example, Brenda mentioned the IT department's importance in institutionalizing change. Brenda had a good relationship with the IT department, and she noted why it was so crucial to have them on board: “IT is the one that builds the workflows that trigger fees being waived because it's very damaging to be undocumented. You take one course and you get a $1,200 bill. I've just lost you.” Brenda could change the workflow because the IT department was on board. Five participants at different institutions mentioned the role of IT department in fostering adverse and favorable contexts.

Three practitioners at different community colleges mentioned having issues with their respective nursing departments. Ana is a student services staff whose role involves supporting undocumented students. She noted the nursing department’s hesitancy to fix false information on their website about needing a social security number for the program. This hesitancy to act led to a meeting where undocumented student liaisons discussed the legal rights of undocumented students to apply for and enroll in the nursing program with the program’s director. However,

she added, “Within the last week or two, I’ve had two or three nursing students that have told me they’ve called [the nursing department], and they don’t tell them anything. They just tell them to call us, and I get it; we’re here to support them, but it’s not just our job. Y’all should know. We met to discuss [undocumented students' rights].” Here, the nursing department engages in tempered resistance when it does not take action, despite the leader of that department having the information necessary to take action. It appears to Ana that the department does not care about these issues enough to change its practices and take on more responsibility for knowing the undocumented students’ rights in their department. This tempered resistance creates an adverse context for additional change.

Data Structures and Discourses. I have already explored some practitioners' actions to collect and tell a story with undocumented student data. This section explores the dominant discourse surrounding data and the existing structures available to collect data for undocumented students, which is key in creating favorable or unfavorable contexts. Data can contribute to the visibility of undocumented student barriers and services and can contribute to the need to serve undocumented students equitably rather than equally for all students. Furthermore, data has a role in making the case for more financial investment, increasing or decreasing the capacity for support, and promoting the diffusion of responsibility for undocumented student support.

Practitioners described very different contexts for discourse and structures related to data. At some campuses, practitioners described having access to data on undocumented students. Campus leaders do not question the importance of sharing data on undocumented students to support that population. Although data may be imperfect and must be treated with care to ensure student privacy and safety, these are not used as excuses not to share data. Table 6 shares the perspective of two practitioners at different community colleges–Denise and Sonia–who spoke

about these favorable data contexts that make it easier to collect data on undocumented students and use it to do outreach and ask for more resources.

Table 5

Examples of the Role of Data Structures and Discourse in Promoting Favorable Contexts for Action in Support of Undocumented Students

Practitioner	Example Quote
Denise	"How do we get data for our students? We send an email to the district office, and I get it right away. I feel extremely fortunate because in previous experiences, it was very hard to obtain data about our [undocumented] students. So our research department collects data annually about our student demographics, their goals, and whether they met their success rates. And then our district provides enrollment data and a list of names, birthdays, and emails without hesitation. And that makes a world of difference.
Sonia	"One of the things that a lot of folks at other campuses have shared with me– with very well-established Dream Resource Centers who have existed for a long time. One of the things that they still have trouble with or have had before is getting critical information from those two offices that will help me outreach and connect with those students. Thankfully, for me, that hasn't been an issue. I've just asked."

Denise and Sonia noted the ease with which they received data for outreach, whether from the district, institutional research office, or admissions and financial aid offices. Sonia and Denise's had routines to share data without any resistance. They also noted that they were aware their context was more positive than other college contexts, where collecting and sharing data was difficult.

In line with Denise and Sonia's observations, nine practitioners explicitly talked about using data narratives to fuel negative contexts for change. These practitioners noted that their college's decision-makers commonly asked for data on undocumented students. These three quotes show this pattern of questioning: "They always ask, 'How many undocumented students

are you serving?' I can only tell you the undocumented students that have come in and met with the counselor" (Jennifer, director), "We know the administration sometimes is so big on that; 'Show me the numbers.' We cannot show numbers here." (Xiomara, student services staff), "They say, 'Oh, we need to see the data.' I know [undocumented students] out there because in a day, I'll see like three or four" (Alicia, counselor). These college leaders engage in tempered resistance by demanding data to make the case for supporting undocumented students yet failing to provide any structures for collecting and sharing data as there exists for Denise's and Sonia's institutions.

Discourses about the data became barriers to getting data for undocumented students. This included the narrative of keeping undocumented student data safe and private. For example. Jennifer shared, "We only track undocumented students offline because we don't ever want to put students in situations if ICE or someone came to try to get the records that we have, we don't want them identified anywhere in the system."

At other campuses, perceiving that the data that was available was not an accurate count of undocumented students was also an issue. Mark (faculty) stated:

> Our campus has between 800 and 1,100 AB 540 students each year. Our institutional research office has tracked some of that. We do have problems with the accuracy of those numbers. AB540 is the only official metric but there are undocumented students that don't apply for AB 540. Yes, I think accurate information is one of our big hurdles or obstacles.

Accurate information is not an obstacle practitioners have with other minoritized student populations. Jennifer gives the example of foster youth. "It's easy for my other programs. I have

an X amount of foster youth. I have this because they identified as foster youth, and they turned in documentation. For the undocumented student population, you can't really say that."

Practitioners at colleges that used data as a part of a favorable context for change and those for which data was a part of the unfavorable context for change were sometimes mere miles from each other. Thus, it is surprising that one college would perceive data as not collectible or shareable, and another has clear processes for collecting and sharing data. This difference makes it clear that the discourse around data (and the accompanying practices) is part of the culture of each college.

6.2.3 Individual/Relational Factors Contributing to Adverse and Favorable Contexts

In addition to the organizational factors, there were several factors at the level of the individual and their relationships with others that contributed to adverse and favorable contexts for action. Here I highlight the role of practitioner's positionality, ally support, and supervisors and managers in shaping contexts for change.

Positionality. I previously explored the role of practitioners' professional identities as giving them a purpose to push for change for undocumented students, even amid resistance. Here, we return to positions and roles serving another purpose of giving the practitioners more or less power and access. Essentially, the context of action can be changed for an individual depending on their role at the college.

Elsa clearly explained this reality when she spoke of changing roles at the institution: "I've accepted in a way that I can no longer be of influence in [financial aid] at the college because of my choice to make more money as a counselor." Elsa believed that the financial aid department needed a great deal of work, and she felt she had a role to play when she had the connections and access necessary to make change from within. However, when she moved to

counseling, those actions she would have wanted to continue taking in financial aid were no longer possible. Her access and connections changed when she moved her counseling role, and the actions she perceived as possible also changed. Elsa added, “All I can do instead is create an undocumented student club, which I'm trying to do right now as a faculty.” The change in role changed her context for action.

Elsa found the opportunity for new actions in her new role, but particular roles also come with specific advantages or disadvantages for action. For example, Brenda talked about being able to effect change for undocumented students by working in “this little underground where we know who to go to if we need something fast-tracked.” She knew how to access people around campus who could get things done and find loopholes. She noted, “We know how to bend [the system] well enough, and who needs to go to whom to get it bent.” She alluded to not receiving any pushback and never feeling unsafe to speak about undocumented student issues. She attributed all this to her role and position as a manager at the college: “While my experience has been nothing but positive, I am also in management… I have the social, navigational, and the human capital to go to folks in management and leadership to get things done.” Brenda also explained her positionality regarding what people have come to expect from her, given her current and former role: “My role has always been working with very marginalized groups. I started working with the formerly incarcerated. I'm known for working with populations that otherwise may not be favored. There's an expectation that I would be a voice for it.”

Brenda’s role and the expectations and assumptions that others hold of those roles create a context that is more amenable to taking some actions by making it an expectation that she will have a voice. Her ability to speak up and have close connections to other key individuals at the institution also means others are less likely to challenge what she says.

Nicholas also relayed never feeling like he had to stay quiet or could not express a thought. He said, “If I believe in the undocumented student experience, the sense of welcoming, the sense of belonging, my voice is pretty loud.” He also attributed this to his position at the institution: “I don't want to cloud the fact that I have certain pull. I do carry some weight as an administrator. I own it, and I'm very grateful. But I know that there's a level of responsibility that comes along with that.” Brenda and Nicholas perceived that their roles protected them from experiencing overt resistance.

For participants who did not have a role that contributed to a favorable context in which to act for change, it was helpful to know others with that power and access. Carlos talked about a tenured instructional faculty who was able to be much more vocal than Carlos believed he could in confronting resistors in the academic senate: “[She is] very vocal and– but again–she’s tenured, so like she can do that confrontation or call it out and feel secure that she has that right to do it.” Carlos perceived this tenured faculty member as having a more amenable context for action, given that her role gave her some protection from the risk of losing her position.

When participants felt they were in a position of power and access at the institution, they were more vocal and less hesitant in their advocacy of undocumented students. In doing so, they contributed to the visibility of undocumented students and modeled how other practitioners should advocate for them.

Ally Support. All practitioners were asked whether they had allies at the institution. Although none of the participants indicated they had no allies, some mentioned their office's relationship with other offices or generally supportive supervisors or peers without much elaboration on the benefits of this allyship or how they worked together. Twelve practitioners

spoke about their allies more enthusiastically and mentioned their critical role, particularly in increasing their capacity to take new actions.

Eight practitioners revealed that their allies were more than colleagues–they were friends. For these practitioners and others, allies provide emotional support, advice, and someone with whom to share the labor of supporting undocumented students and pushing for change. Carmen provided the most details of the support she received from her allies, who she identified as mostly women of color and a few White people. This support she received supported her emotional and physical well-being. For example, following the election of Donald Trump, Carmen was able to share her feelings of distress with her allies and find ways to move forward together: “My *comadre* is the faculty lead of [student program], and my other friend does a lot of community outreach. The three of us were like, ‘We're fucked, we're feeling it, the students are feeling it. Let's do something together.’” These allies were able to share their feelings and come up with ways to address the needs of undocumented students at that time. Carmen noted that her allies, like her *comadre* in this quote, did the work and contributed in any capacity no matter the positionality within the organization:

> This person has a Ph.D., but she would make copies or, you know, go grab more milk or you know, like *pan dulce* or whatever we would offer students. There were no airs about “I'm a full-time faculty member.” Everybody was equal, and everybody was in the work.

Carmen's relationship with this faculty member meant that she did not have to incur the additional labor she might have with a faculty member who was not an ally. The fact that she was a friend and cared about undocumented students' issues meant they could forgo the usual rules of engagement within the hierarchical structure of the community college. Thus, she could

count on her even for the small details of the work. Carmen summarized the mental support she received from her allies.

> Nobody ever wanted to be acknowledged for the work, and we all understood that. It's almost everything from the mental support. From the “I get you, and I feel the weight too.” To the mental support of “You're important, I see them invalidating your work.” To the real “Girl you got to go home at some point,” or “You need to eat.” We are very, very deeply bonded.

Carmen lays out how her allies share the emotional labor of the undocumented student support with her. Her allies recognize her work, and when others are not validating her work. This recognition eases the emotional labor that invalidation would have inflicted without her allies. This support creates a context in which she continues to have the capacity to act in support of undocumented students. Finally, she mentions how her allies support her physical well-being, urging her to rest or eat. Previously, in the interview, she talked about her peers bringing her food because they knew she had low blood sugar and she would forget to eat when working. This support went beyond the collegial to genuine care–as she mentioned, a deep bond.

Others also shared similar benefits of having allies. Bernardo shared the emotional support he received from his allies: “[We] vent, and that helps, at least emotionally, mentally. (laughs) Even if we’re not necessarily getting practical results with the work. So, we find support, or at least I find support in that.” He can continue to act even when his efforts fail to make change, partly because of his relationships with his allies.

For others, the relationship with their allies gave them additional self-efficacy to act because they felt less alone in their efforts. For example, Carlos talked about how he and his allies can interrupt harmful narratives in a meeting.

> Sometimes things get said in meetings because some people may not know that I know some of these other people (laughs) and that we work closely together. That's when you can say, 'Well, actually, let me correct you on X, Y, and Z". And that's been helpful because sometimes this work can feel very solitary.

Knowing others were in the room to support his statements made it easier for Carlos to speak up in a resistant space.

Elsa identified her colleague in the information technology department as an ally.

> Definitely the IT guy. I did a lot without a lot of people knowing what I was doing. Because I had access to his support and like just data, data and like in a way we manipulated. There was no consistency and leadership for us, so [he] didn't have to really do what I said. He would just do it. I started joking around, saying, you know, "you're not my boss." Because he would always go against the supervisor's directive to run the jobs that I asked him to and I feel like there's no better ally than that.

Elsa described this colleague as if he was a "co-conspirator," taking actions that without supervision and sometimes against their supervisor recommendations because they knew it was the right thing to do for undocumented students.

The emotional support and collaboration among allies increased their capacity to create and sustain the actions necessary to institute change. Although none of the participants found themselves in a context with no ally support, they did mention that they believed not having allies would negatively affect them and their ability to be productive.

Supervisors & Managers. Participants also noted the important role supervisors and managers had in providing a favorable context for action or creating and maintaining an adverse context for action. Participants mentioned their supervisors and supervisors and managers of

other departments and offices with which they needed to collaborate. Practitioners in this study pointed out the importance of explicit support from their supervisors and the overall role of supervisors and managers in determining the acceptable routine practices within the culture of a particular office or department.

Eight participants pointed to their supervisors as sources of support, and some, like April and Alma, spoke with particular enthusiasm about that support. Alma stated, "My director is awesome. I don't have to sell her much on the 'why.'" Because of this context, Alma saves the time and energy she might have needed to strategize how to approach her supervisor for help. Alma also stated, "[My supervisor is] like, 'You tell me what you need me to do, and I'll do it.'" This unquestioning of Alma's advice and expertise regarding undocumented student support is important to Alma; even when her college does not implement her suggestions, she does not perceive her supervisor as the challenge to that implementation. April also expressed a similar sentiment: "[My supervisor is] very supportive. I love her. She's great. She's amazing. She's never said no to addressing some of the issues, and I like that she backs me up every single time." Both April and Alma felt they could go to their supervisors with any issue and that their supervisors would recognize those issues as legitimate and worthy of fixing.

Although Dario did not speak about his supervisor in the same enthusiastic terms, he did point to specific ways he provided a favorable context for change. Dario relayed that he never had to challenge his supervisor, whose role was to sign off on the budget: "I basically tell him what I feel the needs are, the things that I'm going to be doing with that money, and he just signs off on it, so that's actually pretty cool." Dario's supervisor creates a favorable context for change by not placing unnecessary barriers to these financial resources. Also, Dario notes that amidst his supervisor's busy schedule, "he just kind of leaves us alone, which is good." In addition to being

able to go to supervisors for help. Bernardo stated, “I’ve also been protected by my dean.” Bernardo believed his dean protected him by being the one to voice issues concerning undocumented students in meetings with higher-ranking leadership where he did not feel safe to share.

Supervisors and managers also had an important role in shaping their offices' and departments' culture and practices. In the section on organizational factors, I pointed to Brenda’s observation of the conservative culture of financial aid and admissions offices based on their auditing cycle and the director’s role in overcoming or maintaining that culture. Because admissions and financial aid departments are unlikely to change their practices on their own without explicit incentives. It is usually up to the leaders of those departments to approve and oversee changes that would benefit undocumented students. Brenda stated, “Honestly, it's up to the director and where they lie… you can have one that's really open-minded, and they say, ‘Yes, you can do X and Y, but this is the documentation I'll need for our auditors.’” Brenda was able to have a discussion with the director at her institution who approved the change and took the initiative to ensure that the department took all steps necessary for that change to occur.

Dario witnessed a difference between the old and newer directors of admissions and records: “Right off the bat, the director of admissions and records understood the importance of supporting undocumented students. Our previous director did a couple of things that just didn’t make sense to me in terms of accessing data.” Brenda and Dario pointed to the ways that directors can make decisions about the practices in their area and how it can affect the context for change in support of undocumented students.

6.3 Summary of Chapter Six

This chapter presents a markedly more complex picture of the context for action than is proposed in the tempered radicals action cycle framework. Participants mentioned many factors (external, organizational, and individual) as important to creating opportunities or creating constraints. Beyond simply thinking of these factors as opportunities and constraints, this chapter presents a way to think about them as contributing to a favorable or adverse context for future action for change in support of undocumented students. Thinking of it in this way, we can see that these factors are not simply a list of factors that create opportunities or constrain action but are interconnected and can serve as an opportunity for action, a constraint on action, *or both*. Furthermore, in a similar way that tempered radicalism (quiet actions for change to the status quo) creates favorable contexts for action, there is an opposite cycle in which tempered resistance (quiet actions that sustain the status quo) creates adverse contexts for change.

The participants provided examples of seven components that can lead to favorable or adverse contexts for change. Many factors contributed to more than one component, and each participant experienced a unique combination of factors and components that shifted the scales of their contexts toward and away from the ability to enact further change for undocumented students.

The context for action constantly shifts for an individual practitioner engaging in tempered radicalism. In this chapter, I illustrate how each practitioner is experiencing a unique set of factors that contribute to their context, and that tempered action for change and tempered resistance may not be engaged in a zero-sum game. Instead, they may advance in parallel, using the same factors to move change *and* the status quo forward.

Chapter 7 Discussion, Implications, and Future Research

This study aimed to understand why and how community college practitioners act to create institutional change supporting undocumented students—drawing on concepts from the tempered radicals framework. I conducted interviews with 27 participants across 16 community college institutions who were involved in supporting undocumented students. The interviews explored the nature and timeline of institutional support, how and why the practitioners began supporting undocumented students, perceptions of institutional culture, the process by which support for undocumented students was adopted institutionalized, and their role and the role of allies in that change. This study suggests that the practitioners I interviewed are working in tempered ways to align their community colleges with equity values to benefit undocumented students. Overall, this study adds to the literature on how and why individuals' organizational norms can shape individuals' actions and, conversely, how those actions can shape organizational norms.

7.1 Summary of Major Findings

My overall research question was: *Why and how do community college practitioners act in tempered ways individually and collectively to create institutional change in support of undocumented students?* There were three sub-questions meant to contribute to answering the larger question. These were: What motivates community college practitioners to want to take action in support of undocumented students? How do practitioners take action for undocumented

student support in community colleges? And, what do practitioners perceive are the opportunities and constraints for action in support of undocumented students at community colleges?

In Chapter 2, I put forth six propositions based on the tempered radicals framework that explored possibilities for understanding the findings. In the following sections I recount the major findings in relation to the propositions, discuss the findings with respect to existing literature, and posit this study's contributions to the literature.

7.1.1 Social, Personal, and Professional Identities Highlight Misalignment That Motivates Action

Chapter 4 explored what motivates community college practitioners to support undocumented student change efforts. Most research on undocumented student literature focuses on practitioners' motivations to support undocumented students in one-on-one settings. Also, existing studies pointing to external factors and events as motivating factors and focusing on ally development did not adequately illuminate the experiences of the practitioners in this study, most of whom began interacting with undocumented students organically within their role at their community college without explicit invitations from peers and without formal training (at least initially). This study extends the understanding of how social, professional, and personal identities organically drove practitioners' motivations to support undocumented students at the organizational level. The practitioners' identities contributed to misalignment between their identity-informed values and the organization (community college) that led many of them to experience additional emotional labor and to turn to allies for support.

For participants, the motivation stemmed from social and personal identities they held before working at community colleges, others because of the values that aligned with their professional identities. Existing studies support the idea that acting in support of undocumented

students is personal (Southern, 2016; Tapia-Fuselier, 2022). Participants who identified as being undocumented had the closest experience to the second proposition inspired by the tempered radicals framework, which highlights that practitioners assert a threatened personal or professional identity to present alternative support for undocumented students. For these practitioners, their own negative experiences in higher education led them to want to act in support of undocumented students. This finding is in line with Southern (2016), who also found undocumented or formerly undocumented practitioners whose personal experiences of being undocumented motivated their efforts to institutionalize change at four-year institutions for undocumented students.

However, here we add to the conceptual understanding that this motivation stems from an identity threatened by the organization in which that individual works. Thus, for practitioners who are or were undocumented, their passion comes from their own experience and interest in the benefit and survival of their selves and others who share that part of themselves. Kezar and Lester also relayed several examples of tempered radicals, all of whose identities matched with the issues to which they were committed, such as a “gay woman” and “ordained priest” who acted on sexual harassment issues, LGBTQ issues, and interfaith issues (Kezar & Lester, 2011, pp. 79-83). In Duran and Jurian’s qualitative study on student affairs practitioners' motivations to act on anti-black racism issues, the racial encounters “of the participants who identified as Black exemplified salient temporal parts of their experiences, as well as meaningful contexts that prompted the ways they made meaning of anti-racism.” (p. 343) Similarly, undocumented practitioners’ salient experiences as undocumented students informed how they made meaning of their own and others’ grievances and witnessed deprivations within the higher education system.

Yet, many documented participants pointed to other minoritized identities, such as Latina/o/x or Mexican, woman, or queer, as important to their motivation to act for undocumented students. The shared experience of oppression was enough to make undocumented student issues personal without having an undocumented identity. Similarly, some participants had family members or close friends or colleagues who were undocumented, which made undocumented student issues personal. These participants noted their privilege in being documented and found overlap in the experiences of oppression from the community college. Chen (2013) examined institutional agents committed to undocumented students at one 4-year institution and also pointed to close relations and friends that motivated practitioners to care about undocumented student issues. Due to these interlocking and intersectional systems of oppression, participants developed a critical consciousness that allowed them to be more aware of the importance of creating change for undocumented students.

Professional identities also played an essential role for many participants, particularly those who were not undocumented and did not speak to other minoritized identities as motivations. This identity came with values like believing that undocumented students also deserved the success experienced by and support given to other student groups at the community college. These participants believed it was their job and responsibility to provide support and advocate for change for undocumented student success. They believed this even when doing so was not part of their formal job description (see also Hoy & Nguyen, 2020; Nienhusser, 2018; Southern, 2016). This lack of formal responsibility to provide support also led to additional misalignment between the values rooted in the participants' professional identities and what they perceived were the values of an institution that was not responding to undocumented students' needs.

The emotional labor that some practitioners experience results from working within an organization whose values are misaligned in some way. Working with undocumented students already puts practitioners in a position to have to manage trauma experienced by students. However, practitioners in this study also spoke about the emotional labor of not receiving what they need from the college to support undocumented students in the ways they would like. Tapia-Fuselier (2022) also noted a similar finding in his study of undocumented practitioners who worked in USRCs: “Despite their passion for this work, the amount of emotional labor embedded in their professional roles, as well as *working in the context of imperfect college campus environments* [emphasis added], makes this work all the more challenging” (p. 467). Hoy and Nguyen (2020) found that student affairs practitioners working on undocumented student issues experienced compassion fatigue. Furthermore, they found that practitioners’ fatigue was connected to their identities as student advocates, which placed them in a position to work more than their peers and encounter difficult situations related to undocumented student experiences. This study adds to these studies by emphasizing the role of misaligned personal-professional and organizational values in the emotional labor of those supporting undocumented students.

Within these imperfect college campus environments, allies and, supportive peers and supervisors played a major role in mitigating this emotional labor. In Chapter 6, I discussed how supportive relationships with allies and supervisors across the college created a more favorable context for action (Proposition 3). Practitioners were more willing to take action outside the norm, such as going against orders or making systemic changes to practices, if they had emotional and labor support from allies and supervisors. The idea that allies provide emotional support for practitioners is corroborated in the undocumented student support literature by Tapia-

Fuselier (2023), who wrote about the role of colleague connections in motivating USRC professionals to continue supporting undocumented students. However, this study adds to how allies support not just one-on-one work with undocumented students but organizational change by identifying how they collaborate and co-conspire to take action toward change for undocumented students on campus.

7.1.2 Practitioners Act in Isolation or Within Organizational Norms

In Chapter 4, I explored actions taken by practitioners. It is helpful to understand these tactics, especially when practitioners are constrained not only by the organization and the nature of social justice change but also by the liminality of undocumented students' legal statuses. This study proposes retheorizing Meyerson's strategies into five tactic categories from most to least tempered to align with the new understanding that practitioners use tactics that coincide (to different degrees) with organizational norms. These five categories included resisting quietly, leveraging higher education norms, expanding and sustaining visibility, targeting doable organizational changes, and organizing collective action.

Tactics that fell under the more tempered side of the spectrum showed how many practitioners supported students quietly, in isolation, or within a small informal group of committed individuals. Prior studies of practitioners and undocumented student change offer fragmented discussions of some tactics within these categories. For example, Martinez-Hoy and Nguyen (2021) referred to "experts in the shadows" to talk about how practitioners in Indiana quietly took on advocating for undocumented students and navigating the obstacles these students face.

Practitioners' less-tempered strategies that still fell within institutional norms included staying within their formal duties or waiting to support undocumented students in their free time,

leveraging the work of other community colleges, and selling undocumented student support with available data, narratives, and training. Scholars have discussed one or a few of these tactics but have not provided a comprehensive list of tactics. For example, some studies have also recounted the narratives of practitioners doing work outside of their formal work responsibilities (Chen, 2013; Chen & Rhoads, 2016; Nienhusser, 2018) and how practitioners filled gaps in financial aid support when the campus processes and procedures failed undocumented students (Harvey & Palmer-Asemota, 2023). Harvey and Palmer-Asemota (2023) also noted that practitioners raised awareness of undocumented student issues through "student club advising, faculty advisory boards, student government, and by collaborating interdepartmentally" (p. 11). The importance of creating and facilitating training was deemed a significant strategy by other scholars focusing on undocumented student issues (see Chen, 2013; Gildersleeve & Vigil, 2015; Southern, 2016). This study furthers these studies by providing a more complete picture of how practitioners work within existing organizational norms to provide novel ways of supporting undocumented students.

In fewer cases, practitioners were able to push for more extensive changes and did so within the acceptable organizational norms of higher education. Examples in this study include changing the data systems and implementing a change in the education code to its fullest, significantly changing the opportunities for undocumented students moving forward. Few, if any, studies have discussed these types of organizational changes for undocumented students and how they occur.

Practitioners preferred tempered tactics, and few engaged in sweeping collective action. Moreover, they engaged outside the organization's reach when they engaged in collective action. The findings follow the contributions of Kezar et al. (2011) and Kezar and Lester (2011), who

posited that colleges and university faculty and staff used tactics that fell within the norms of higher education and preferred more tempered tactics.

> Higher education-oriented tactics comprise a tempered grassroots leadership approach to organizational change that is aligned with academic culture and institutional methods, allowing the grassroots leaders to operate under the radar until the institution seems prepared to take on the initiative on a formal level. (Kezar et al., 2011, p. 147)

Therefore, this study contributes to a new understanding of how higher education norms temper practitioners' actions for change in support of undocumented students, effectively limiting the scale and impact of potential change. With this in mind, we can uphold the first part of this dissertation's first proposition, which suggested that participants discuss change continuously and in fragmented ways. Change for undocumented students was often the result of the accumulation of tempered actions.

7.1.3 Episodic Events Play an Important Role

The tempered radicals framework assumes change occurs in continuous and fragmented ways because organizational norms and values temper action for individuals. However, the nature of undocumented student issues allows this study to extend the understanding of how continuous and fragmented change can coincide with periods of more intense change due to episodic events. Chapter 6 highlights how external episodic events significantly changed the context for action, temporarily opening up opportunities to act in ways they could not before the event. The tempered radicals framework said little about how outside episodic events can force organizations to align their values and practices with those of their most minoritized employees and customers. This study's findings, therefore, contradict the second part of the first proposition, which stated that change would not result from episodic events. Practitioners did discuss global,

federal, and state-level events and funding opportunities that dramatically changed the context for undocumented students and the support they needed at community colleges, both positively and negatively.

Some of these events, such as the election of President Trump in 2016 and the subsequent rescission of DACA, had clear negative consequences for undocumented students and their families. These events were too much in the U.S. media and public sphere to ignore. They harmed undocumented students and their families and catalyzed change by putting pressure on community colleges to respond and meet the additional needs of their undocumented students, who still had every right to enroll in their campuses. The global COVID-19 pandemic also created challenges for undocumented students, their families, and practitioners trying to change or sustain the change in support for undocumented students they managed at their community college. Finally, several California funding opportunities changed the support landscape for undocumented students. However, this funding is usually unstable and leaves college practitioners scrambling to find alternative funding structures and sources that would allow them to sustain change.

Without question, the policy contexts and sociopolitical climate at the local, state, and federal levels are powerful factors in the experiences of undocumented students in and out of higher education. The "Trump effect" (Munoz et al., 2018), public debates on undocumented students' access to higher education (Lopez, 2020), and the institutional responses to the rescission of DACA (Streitwieser et al., 2020; Taylor & Barrera, 2019) are among the many studies that have actively and necessarily discussed these contexts. However, this study is among the few within undocumented student literature that discusses the role of these episodic events in enabling or constraining practitioner action in support of undocumented students.

7.1.4 Symbolic Representations Composed an Important Part of the Context for Action: Locus of Responsibility and Serving All Students

Practitioners described several symbolic representations of community colleges that were part of the context for action. These components included discourse on locus of responsibility for undocumented student support, discourse on all students, risk, visibility of barriers and services, and perceived interest in taking action. I want to highlight three discourses in this study that shed light on how symbolic representations of organizations contribute to favorable and adverse contexts for change for tempered radicals supporting change efforts for undocumented students– risk, diffusion of responsibility, and serving all students. These were central to understanding how the values of practitioners differed from those of the community colleges they worked for and how practitioners were taking action to try and align these values with their own. Also, although I identify these components as largely symbolic representations, organizational-material practices follow and reproduce these symbolic components and affect practitioners' actions.

This study's findings provide additional support to suggest that fixing long-standing issues of equity and social justice in higher education can feel risky. The ever-changing policy context for undocumented students and their liminal legal status, together with xenophobia and racism perpetuated by the presidential administration at the time, present a unique challenge to leaders and practitioners in community colleges (Chen, 2013, 2014). Chen (2014) noted how legislative ambiguity and the national debate over undocumented student access to higher education made it easy for the president in her case study to hold public support for legislation like the DREAM Act but not translate that enthusiasm to change institutional practices. Many practitioners in this study believed that their college leaders were hesitant to support undocumented students because of the risk it posed to their positions and the college. Serving

undocumented students within the confines of status quo practices seemed the most convenient and safe despite the ways that it continued to fail to meet undocumented students' needs. Some practitioners also felt it was risky to question organizational practices because of the politics within the community college. They felt they did not have the power to speak up about changes. Tempered radicals focus greatly on the personal risk practitioners feel within organizations (Meyerson, 2005) and higher education (Kezar & Lester, 2011). It does not focus on how the context for action can be even more adverse when leaders in the organization feel pressure from inside and outside sources due to the political nature of the issues.

One common way to address undocumented students' needs within the status quo was to designate one or a few practitioners as the primary contact for all undocumented students and their needs. Practitioners described how this left the responsibility for undocumented student support and success on the shoulders of a few practitioners within the community college marginalized and hampered change in support of this population. Diffusing the responsibility for undocumented student support was reinforced in the daily material practice. For example, through material job descriptions. If one person (or a few people) working on undocumented student support had that in their job description, it triggered the narrative that "undocumented student support is only this person's responsibility." If practitioners did not have serving undocumented students in their job description, it triggered an alternative narrative: "This is not your job (i.e., responsibility)." This narrative also had material consequences like prompting human resources inquiries into time spent working on undocumented student issues. Having or not having undocumented student support be part of the job description had the same effect of communicating that undocumented student support was not a shared responsibility among all

practitioners at community colleges. For most practitioners, this was a barrier. There was one practitioner, however, who did feel her campus did a better job of dispersing responsibility.

Concurrent with the question of responsibility was the narrative that community colleges should focus on serving all students equally. This discourse communicated that the specialized needs of undocumented students were not a priority or that providing additional support to undocumented students would be seen as taking away support from the general population or other minoritized groups. This discourse was a challenge for practitioners who worked at community colleges that emphasized serving “all students” without prioritizing the needs of undocumented students. In contrast, practitioners felt some momentum to push for change at community colleges that emphasized equity, meaning that the leadership and decision-makers at the community college communicated the institution's responsibility to meet each minoritized population's differing needs and barriers.

Castrellón (2021) spelled out these two discourses when speaking to practitioners and undocumented students at one large public historically White institution. Her findings illustrated how practitioners removed themselves from having to be informed about undocumented student issues and passed on undocumented students to the USRC staff, who were seen as solely responsible. They did this subconsciously, although their practices and structures consciously reinforced the diffusion of responsibility. Undocumented students also noticed how they were referred to USRC staff and did not feel they belonged at general offices like financial aid. This study adds to Castrellón’s findings, clarifying that practitioners who see themselves as responsible for undocumented student support and success also understand these symbolic discourses across community college campuses. Practitioners in this study were aware that people (e.g., peers, supervisors, and leadership) and structures, policies, and practices reproduced

the idea that undocumented student support was not everyone's responsibility and that most practitioners' jobs were to serve students equally, not equitably. It was clear to these participants that this stifled their ability to act for change for undocumented students and that there were real consequences for acting against these dominant institutional discourses.

Notably, these dominant discourses differed significantly from the dominant discourses and framing of immigration policy at the state and federal levels. Nicholls (2014) and others talked about the "deserving" and "undeserving" narratives that shaped discourse in the state and federal policy arena, where immigrant advocates pointed to cultural, legal, and economic attributes that would paint them as deserving of policy benefits. Muniz, Lewis, Tumer, and Kane (2023) also noted this push for benefits for "exceptional" immigrants, continuing the evidence of the "good" vs. "bad" immigrant narrative. However, this narrative did not translate similarly to the community college context. Being deserving at community colleges was less connected to being exceptional (e.g., an exceptional student or citizen). Deservingness was more prominently about showing that there was enough need–through issue-selling like using data, undocumented student narratives, and continuous advocacy–to warrant additional resources needed to meet that need.

Thus, Proposition 5, which expected practitioners to evoke symbolic representations of undocumented students as "good" and "deserving," did not play out as I initially intended. The idea of exceptionality might not be prominent in this context because of the idea that community college is for everyone. These discourses that hesitated to make undocumented student barriers exceptional still served to stifle the institutional change necessary to meet those exceptional needs.

7.1.5 Tempered Resistance: A Missing Piece to The Dynamic Contexts of Opportunity and Constraint

Meyerson's action cycle clearly illustrates how practitioners' tempered actions, intentionally or unintentionally, move the needle toward a more favorable context for future action. Overall, practitioners' actions (and those of their allies and supportive supervisors and leadership) led to more action opportunities (Proposition 4). This pattern emerged because practitioners' actions often contributed to the components of a more favorable context for future action. For example, actions to increase the visibility of undocumented student issues made it easier to take action in the future. Institutionalized support for undocumented students also generally led to greater capacity and more practitioners who would continue to support additional change. More practitioners also meant more capacity to leverage discourses on a commitment to educate all students *and* do so with a commitment to equity, to find funding opportunities, and to create new institutional norms. This finding closely aligns with the continuous change and the idea in Meyerson's original spectrum of leveraging small wins as well as the cyclical nature of the action cycle.

However, examining the adverse context components in this study revealed a new perspective on why tempered action exists to subvert the status quo, which is missing from the tempered radicals framework. Tempered radicals act in a context where practitioners and organizations are also engaged in tempered resistance to the changes tempered radicals want to make. I define tempered resistance as the inconspicuous actions of individuals and groups that fall within the bounds of organizational norms and effectively result in sustaining the status quo. Whether practitioners engage in this tempered resistance intentionally or unintentionally, these actions contribute to adverse contexts for subverting the status quo. I deem this resistance as

tempered because the alternative–blatant resistance–might raise red flags that would expose how organizations that espouse commitments to equity and social justice are not aligned with those values. Tempered resistance is difficult for individuals to expose because they are inconspicuous actions that fall within the bounds of what is considered appropriate behavior or belief within the organization. In this case, outright resistance to change in support of undocumented students would highlight how community colleges are not aligned with supporting undocumented students. However, smaller, more quiet forms of resistance do not raise any red flags and do not require very much effort, given that the status quo of institutions already supports a challenging environment for acting in support of undocumented students.

The practitioners in this study pointed to tempered resistance when they illustrated the barriers to their change efforts to support undocumented students. They spoke about the campus leaders' discourses already mentioned around serving "all students" and who was and was not responsible for serving undocumented students, which communicated that they were engaging in inappropriate practice when they worked on undocumented support and relied on unexamined assumptions of what those discourses meant. Other studies support the presence of these discourses in higher education but have not connected them to the idea of tempered resistance.

Castrellón (2021) talks about practitioners' choices not to advise students once they find out a student is undocumented, instead handing the student off to the one practitioner responsible for knowing their particular situation. Castrellón points to this diffusion of responsibility pattern as a normal part of these practitioners' practices, contributing to negative experiences and outcomes of undocumented students seeking guidance at the college. Looking at this pattern as tempered resistance allows us to understand that practitioners who engage in this action or

inaction create an adverse context for change and maintain the status quo, even if they are not intending or aware of the impact of those actions or inactions.

Practitioners also repeatedly noted inaction or stalling (e.g., not approving changes or making changes to policy or practice, not attending events, not being proactive about finding funding opportunities, and not communicating responsibility for serving undocumented students equitably) as a common way college leaders, supervisors, or peers were not clearly supportive. The ways that practitioners resist in tempered ways are apparent in other studies on undocumented student issues. In their study on institutional agents and their support or exclusion of undocumented Latina/o college students, Luedke and Corral noted that institutional agents were “unapologetically uneducated” (Luedke & Corral, 2021, p. 582). They asserted that institutional agents “may rely on ignorance of undocumented student circumstances to avoid supporting them” (Luedke & Corral, 2021, p. 582). These examples can be construed as a form of tempered resistance because remaining ignorant and not seeking education about undocumented students is considered appropriate within organizational norms that suggest only a few practitioners need to understand undocumented student issues. Remaining ignorant not only negatively impacts undocumented students who come into contact with practitioners who do not take action to support them, but it also impedes supportive practitioners from taking future action to support undocumented students.

Practitioners in this study sometimes used organizational norms to enforce policies or practices that effectively quelled attempts to change the status quo. For example, when institutional leaders told a classified employee that they could not support undocumented students because it was considered “overtime” as part of the union contract, and “the institution” could not pay overtime. Another example included enforcing a policy that counselors cannot

make room in their schedule for undocumented students who were experiencing financial aid or enrollment issues and needed immediate attention. Practitioners with power within the community college enforced these policies and practices–creating an adverse context for change–without any effort (as perceived and experienced by the practitioners in this study) to find other ways to systematically address the undocumented students' needs.

Understanding tempered resistance is important to understanding how to overcome this resistance. A vast amount of scholarship in organizational development literature has sought to understand organizational change, and directly or indirectly addressed resistance. Kurt Lewin, a pioneer in organizational development, believed that organizations were fields of change forces and forces of resistance constantly at play (Lewin, 1942, 1943). However, there is still much to understand about the nature of resistance in higher education. Studies on resistance to change in higher education have examined resistance from the perspective of top-down changes stemming from administrative leadership (Deneen & Boud, 2014; Lane, 2007). In many of these studies, faculty are the practitioners most focused on as sources of resistance (McBride, 2010). However, change efforts supporting undocumented students can begin with administrators, faculty, or staff, and resistance to change can also occur among any of these groups.

Kezar and Lester’s study, which was seminal to this dissertation because it looked at similar change efforts higher education rooted in social justice, did offer similar examples of tempered resistance for the grassroots leaders in their study. They stated:

> The normalization of domination and oppression, the resistance to changes that challenge the status quo, and the potentially differing interests between faculty and staff and the administration (and between other groups on campus) suggest that grassroots faculty and staff are likely to experience abusive power dynamics.

Kezar and Lester named five types of power dynamics: oppression, silencing, controlling, stalling tactics, and microaggressions. She calls them power dynamics because of the complex ways that power and privilege played a role in the resistance that her participants recounted. The power dynamics mirror what I am calling tempered resistance in this dissertation.

Although I agree that power dynamics and privilege play a major role in the experiences shared by the practitioners in this study, tempered resistance contributes to the understanding of the dominant power and how it sustains itself by illustrating dynamics not adequately captured by examining power relations and hierarchies within higher education alone. One main difference is that tempered resistance highlights the fact that resistance is tempered, making it very difficult for participants to identify it as resistance. Folks in power may have the power to fire someone, publicly shame, or simply say "no, we are not going to make that change or institute that new support." However, the forms of resistance recounted were sometimes so obscure that participants questioned themselves as to whether the action was really resistance or whether it was done intentionally.

Another difference is that tempered resistance points not only to individuals but also to an organization's norms as carrying a power that maintains the status quo. Therefore, someone does not have to be in a position of power to uphold these norms. The norms that maintain adverse contexts are practiced and upheld even by tempered radicals themselves. A long-established idea posited in the 1940s by organizational development researchers like Kurt Lewin, Lester Coch, and Jon French suggests that "resistance does not arise from the individual, but from the context in which the change takes place." (Burnes, 2015). The tempered resistance maintaining adverse contexts in this study was not just about who was wielding power but how the symbolic and material representations of the organization were upholding practices, policies, and ensuing

behaviors that continued to constrain tempered radicals as they sought to support undocumented students. The organizational context is why factors facilitating change in this study (e.g., hiring an undocumented student liaison) were the same factors that could be slowing change down (e.g., Now the responsibility to serve undocumented students falls on one person).

This study corroborates existing understanding that actions taken by one or more practitioners in support of undocumented students will lead to more opportunities for action but also introduces new perspectives on how actions taken by practitioners to maintain the status quo will constrain action in support of undocumented students–which I call tempered resistance. These findings highlight the ways that practitioners who act as tempered radicals for undocumented students and practitioners who act in support of the status quo are acting less in a zero-sum game of tug-of-war where one side is winning, and the other side is losing, but where change and the status quo are both advancing on parallel tracks.

7.2 Implications for Research

This study has furthered the understanding of tempered radicals in community colleges in Southern California and their actions supporting undocumented students in the face of tempered resistance. However, more research is needed to understand the many factors contributing to tempered radicalism and tempered resistance pertaining to change for undocumented students in higher education. Several findings could be explored in more detail in future studies. One finding in this study is that the same factors could contribute to favorable and adverse contexts for action. This finding suggests the possibility of two parallel action cycles happening simultaneously: One in which tempered radicals, motivated by the need to make their values congruent with the organization, are finding opportunities for change, and another–which I propose is *tempered resistance*– in which practitioners are (intentionally or unintentionally)

reproducing the status quo. More research is needed to understand the role of tempered resistance in reproducing adverse contexts for action for practitioners who want to support minoritized populations. Similar to actions that are more or less tempered, there may be a spectrum of categories that organize acts of resistance that are less and more tempered.

In this study, it was clear that practitioners' roles within the community college were an important factor in taking less-tempered actions. Future studies should examine further the position of practitioners who care about undocumented student issues and how differences in power and privilege inherent in the hierarchy of higher education may lead to more or fewer opportunities for change for undocumented students.

My findings also highlighted several components that contributed to favorable and adverse contexts for change for the practitioners in this study. However, because practitioners spanned 16 institutions and there were few perspectives represented in each, it was impossible to examine the extent to which organizational context constrains or catalyzes institutional change in support of undocumented students. Future studies can examine the extent to which political risk, the idea of serving all students, responsibility for undocumented student support, and visibility are or are not present in particular campuses and how these symbolic representations of the organization translate into material practices.

I conducted this study in a specific area in California and a moment in time with a specific social justice issue. Given the rapidly changing context for undocumented students, future studies may benefit from a longitudinal design that follows the changes happening on undocumented student campuses and can observe the processes and people involved in making the change happen. This process would more accurately capture those involved and how action may be tempered. Furthermore, future studies could look at tempered radicalism in higher

education for undocumented students in other parts of the country where the political context might be more restrictive or less clear. It may also be that the concept of tempered resistance might not be as applicable to more openly hostile state environments. Also, the community college system in California is another unique context that could mean different processes for change in other higher education systems.

Finally, equity for undocumented students is a social justice issue. It may be interesting to apply these findings to other social justice issues, such as racial equity, gender equity, or sexual harassment issues, to understand practitioners' actions and whether some similar components and factors are tempering those actions toward change. Applying more critical theories that explicitly examine power dynamics and privilege may shed additional light on the interactions among practitioners and the forces that temper change and drive resistance.

7.3 Implications and Recommendations for Practice

The findings presented in this study suggest that many things need to happen for community colleges to become environments where practitioners feel free to support and advocate for undocumented students without fear or hesitation. The first step is for practitioners, especially campus leaders, to acknowledge that community colleges were not built to serve undocumented students. As such, the structures, policies, practices, and associated values and beliefs do not currently align with serving undocumented students well, and practitioners who understand this misalignment best are experiencing tempered resistance to change efforts to serve undocumented students better.

Community college leaders and decision-makers need to prioritize the needs of undocumented students who are experiencing inequitable outcomes and negative experiences at their colleges. California community colleges are ideally positioned to prioritize undocumented students

because of their unique mission, commitments to equity, and geographic locations that make undocumented students a significant portion of their student body. Clear communication and prioritization of undocumented students within the equity conversation should provide practitioners who care about undocumented student issues a favorable environment in which they can be less tempered with their tactics for change.

Community colleges should implement processes and systems for understanding where community colleges might fall short of adequately supporting undocumented students and take steps to fill the gaps in support. To do this, most practitioners within most departments and offices within community colleges need to share responsibility for understanding the gaps in support in their area and identifying and implementing solutions. Department and office leaders should inquire into their practices, policies, and structures to assess what is not working for undocumented students in their area of the college. Inquiry requires collecting quantitative or qualitative data in departments or offices that give the practitioners a better understanding of what is and is not working for undocumented students. In this study, Elsa provided a helpful example of inquiry practice when she asked undocumented students to provide feedback on emails that went out to them to ensure these emails clearly communicated the intended message. More practitioners in many departments across campus should practice these inquiry practices. However, admissions and financial aid offices must undergo this inquiry process given the most common barriers for undocumented students occur in those departments. In an environment where a whole department is systematically undertaking inquiry, tempered radicals can point to necessary changes as part of that formal process rather than attempt to change practices informally, quietly, or through loopholes in organizational norms.

To assist inquiry into undocumented student experiences on campus, community colleges should provide accessible and safe mechanisms for undocumented students and practitioners to report negative experiences. This data can inform the inquiry practices at the departmental level mentioned above or help improve the practice of individual practitioners with gaps in their knowledge or practice.

Each department and area should provide professional development for their faculty, staff, and leadership concerning relevant information on undocumented students. It is useful to have practitioners who are experts on undocumented students' needs and who stay abreast of the latest policy changes. However, these practitioners should not be the only individuals responsible for giving undocumented students accurate information and guidance. These practitioner's roles should focus on assisting the college in institutionalizing practices, policies, and structures that support every practitioner's ability to serve undocumented students on campus. Practitioners with these roles should have the power to identify gaps, suggest solutions, and monitor progress toward change throughout the campus.

Tempered radicals notice the signals that campus leadership sends regarding undocumented students. Campus leaders should show visible interest in supporting undocumented students. Practitioners in this study noticed when campus leaders did not attend meetings or events, visit undocumented student campus spaces, or interact with practitioners charged with undocumented student success. Campus leaders can take significant steps to support practitioners and understand undocumented student issues by participating in events and visiting the spaces and practitioners on the frontlines of undocumented student support. These steps can help campus leaders stay updated with the latest information on undocumented student

policies and campus issues. Staying informed can help campus leaders support practitioners by proactively communicating support for undocumented students.

Finally, community college leaders should celebrate the efforts of tempered radicals to improve the support of undocumented students. Practitioners who care about undocumented students need supportive spaces to discuss issues, especially when local or national discourse is hostile toward undocumented students. Furthermore, undocumented employees need to feel safe on college campuses and be afforded all of the support one hopes undocumented students receive in a welcoming environment.

7.4 Implications for Policymakers

Federal, state, and community college system policies that affect undocumented students are clear catalysts for positive action on community college campuses. Policies can provide a favorable context for change by providing additional funding, mandating human resources to support, and lessening the political and organizational risk of supporting undocumented students. Therefore, policymakers should consider the ways that policy can remove barriers for undocumented students *and* remove barriers for practitioners who care about the experiences and success of undocumented students.

There have already been some strides at the California community college system and at the California state level to address obvious barriers for undocumented students. However, the findings in this study imply additional considerations for policymakers at the California Community College system, state, and federal levels. New policies catalyze change on community college campuses and inspire tempered radicals to find new opportunities for change. However, policies affecting undocumented students have not provided the resources for campuses to implement the policies in ways that do not further marginalize undocumented

student support at community colleges. Policy-makers at the system and state levels must ensure that policies come with resources and accountability structures to bring all practitioners up to date with the policy and ensure that policies produce their intended effects. For example, the state policy requiring an undocumented student liaison position should have provided additional support about how that person should work in partnership with other offices and departments on campus to ensure they appropriately serve undocumented students. Without that support, many liaisons have become the only practitioners responsible for providing undocumented students with needs. As this study argues, these policies recreate conditions that make it difficult for tempered radicals to take further actions in support of undocumented students.

Federal policymakers should consider enacting a policy that allows undocumented students to attend higher education institutions and provides a uniform process for providing that access. A clear and consistent process for ensuring access for undocumented students would minimize confusion and set a standard nationwide. Furthermore, providing a path to citizenship for undocumented students would remove many of their barriers within higher education and beyond. These policies would provide legitimacy and clarity for practitioners supporting and advocating for undocumented student support at community colleges. However, even if policymakers move forward with these policies, practitioners still need support and resources to implement them at their community college campuses.

7.5 Conclusion

Practitioners working at community colleges are critical actors in social justice change, particularly for undocumented students. Undocumented student issues have provided a rapidly changing and uniquely challenging context for higher education. There are many practices,

policies, and structures that continue to create unnecessary barriers for undocumented students in community colleges.

At every campus, a few or more practitioners are likely aware of the changes necessary to align community college values with those practices, policies, and structures. The interviews in this study depict how practitioners become aware that their community colleges' practices, policies, and structures do not align with their personal and professional values of equity and justice. I learned that practitioners' identities are significant to having or creating a connection with undocumented students. These identities motivate practitioners to engage in equity work at the margins of the community college on behalf of undocumented students.

This study also explored the practitioners' role in change at their community colleges to align those values. Participants reflected on their actions, opportunities, and constraints for changing institutional practices, policies, and structures. Practitioners were more likely to engage in undocumented student support alone or to temper change by aligning those changes with institutional norms.

I also highlighted seven components that make up the context for action and can make it easier or more difficult for practitioners to act in support of change for undocumented students. This context went beyond material resources like funding and included symbolic, ideological discourses that reproduced the institution's norms. These fueled beliefs around risk, what it meant to serve all students, and who was responsible for undocumented student support. A closer examination of the adverse contexts for change resulted in conceptualizing tempered resistance, a term used to describe quiet actions taken by practitioners that uphold the status quo and maintain adverse contexts for change in support of undocumented students.

Many factors, whether external to the community college (e.g., policy), organizational (e.g., leadership), and individual-interpersonal (e.g., supervisor relationships) contributed to the components that make up the context for action. These findings highlighted the need for all practitioners at community colleges to take responsibility for aligning the institution's practices, policies, and structures to the espoused values of equitably serving all students, including undocumented students.

Ultimately, this study shows how practitioners, motivated by their identities, take strides to change institutions in support of undocumented students. However, these practitioners do so within a context where tempered resistance maintains the status quo that tempers their actions. Community college leaders and practitioners need to consider the opportunities lost when organizational norms temper practitioners' actions and what they might mean for the experiences and success of undocumented students on their campuses.

Appendix A: Interview Protocol

Opening Script:

Provide participant with a copy of the consent form and allow time to answer any questions they may have. (Initiate rest of script if they consent. Thank them for their time, if they decide not to participate further.)

Thank you for agreeing to meet with me. As you may know, I am conducting a study on how change in support of undocumented students happens on community college campuses.

Today, I'm hoping that we will have an opportunity to get through about 11 questions that ask about the nature and timeline of change in support of undocumented students on your campus, your role in that change, and the institutional culture toward undocumented students.

(If they agree to be recorded on the consent form) I see you are comfortable with audio recording. I will be recording our conversation today to ensure your comments are captured accurately. Only my advisor and I will have access to the recording and any notes taken here.

(If they do not agree to be recorded on the consent form) I see you prefer not to be recorded. I will be taking notes during the interview instead. Only my research partners and I will have access to any notes taken here.

1. What are the institutionalized supports for undocumented students at this institution?
2. When did the idea for institutionalized support start and when was it finally institutionalized?
    a. Do you feel like it took a long time or a short time to get this institutionalized?
    b. Who was the first to mention the idea of institutionalized support?
3. Why were these services/resources deemed necessary? What issues were these supports intended to mitigate?
4. What was the formal process for institutionalizing support for undocumented students and who was involved?
5. In what ways were you involved with undocumented student issues?
    a. How did you become involved?

   b. Was there a particular person that got you involved with undocumented student issues? If so who?
6. What would you say is this institution's stance toward undocumented students?
   a. Is the leadership vocal about undocumented student issues?
   b. Has leadership at this institution communicated support for undocumented students an communicated that support is a priority? How?
   c. Are there any documents, emails, or other materials from the institution for undocumented students?
7. What are the main arguments for and against institutionalized support for undocumented students?
   a. Are there particular stories about undocumented students that were told as the campus was thinking about change for this student population?
8. Can you think of an instance where you felt it was not okay to speak up as an advocate of undocumented students?
   a. Can you think of an instance when you wanted to do something around the issue of undocumented student support but didn't?
9. Do you have particularly close allies or friends who worked on change in support of undocumented students?
   a. Can you tell me the ways they provided support?
   b. Can you describe a time when they helped you or you worked together?
10. Are their people who were particularly resistant, opposed, or were just not helpful toward change in support of undocumented students?
11. Is there additional support you feel undocumented students need but are currently not receiving?
12. Are there others I should talk to?

Thank you for your time. Do you have any questions that you would like to ask me at this time?
Please feel free to contact me with any questions.

Appendix B: A Priori Theory-Driven Codebook

Appendix Table 1

A Priori Theory-Driven Codebook

Theory/ FRWK	Overall Explanation for Codes	Code name	Definition
Tempered Radicals	Identity (the self): is stable and mutable. It is formed in relationship with others. Identity is more relevant to individuals in certain contexts and the context determines whether an identity is visible or invisible in an organization and whether that identity is valued or not.	Identity	Interviewee refers to a personal or professional aspect of themselves (identity) as salient and important
		Relationship with others	Interviewee refers to their relationship with other actors as important to action or lack of action
		Self-Efficacy	Interviewees describe feeling like they could affect change, usually leading to the search for opportunities.
	Action: Meyerson delineates 5 ways that action looks like for tempered radicals ranging from Resisting quietly and stating true to one's identity to organizing collective action.	Quiet Resistance and Staying True to Self	Interviewees describe a situation in which they quietly express their identities but in ways that may not be visible to those they threaten
		Turning Personal Threats into Opportunities	Interviewees describe a situation in which they experienced took personal action in response to a threat to their identity but did not discuss the action with others
		Broadening Impact through Negotiation	Interviewees describe an action in which they experienced an immediate threat to identity, values, or beliefs and negotiated another person in order for learning to occur
		Leveraging Small Wins	Interviewee describes a situation in which an action with a positive outcome led to opportunities for other actions

		Organizing Collective Action	Interviewee describes a situation in which they or others created a structure and framing to bring allies into a collective for action
	Perceived Opportunities and Constraints	Opportunities	Interviewee describes something that allowed for action or change
		Constraints	Interviewee describes something that constrained their actions or change
Institutional Logics	Symbolic representations: theories, framing, narratives: How societal logics are translated in institutional fields to	Theories	Interviewees allude to “general guiding principles and explanations for why and how institutional structures and practices should operate” (Thornton et.al., 2011, p. 152).
		Narratives	Interviewee refers to a “story or account that organizes events and human actions inro a whole, therby attributing significance to individual actions and events according to their effect on the story or account” (Polkinghorne, 1988 as cited by Thornton et.al., 2011, p. 155).
		Frames Prognostic Diagnostic Motivational	Interviewees refer to frames that talk about their being a problem, shapes a grievance (prognostic), frames that attribute the problem to something (diagnostic); or that move people to something (motivational)
	Material Practice: “is a key concept that links broader cultural belief systems and social structures (including institutional logics) to individual and organizational action. Practice refers to forms or constellations of socially meaningful activity that are relatively coherent and established.” (Thornton et.al., 2011, p. 128)	Practice Appropriate	Interviewee refers to actions, activities, practices, or policies that are considered aligned with dominant logics
		Practice Anomalous	Interviewee refers to actions, activities, practices, or policies that are NOT considered aligned with dominant logics
	Resource Environment: The economic systems in which practices are embedded such as financing, manpower, customer demands, physical capital, and supplies, as well	Resource Environment Financial Resources Human Resources	Interviewees refer to resources (or lack thereof) in the form of financing, manpower, or pressure outside of campus, as an asset or a barrier to action in support of undocumented students

	as external competition and cooperation.	External Pressures	
	Change in Logics: The ways in which logics can change either in transformational or developmental ways	Transformational Replacement Blending Segregation Developmental Assimilation Elaboration Expansion or Contraction	Interviewee refers to a change in the belief systems or material practices of the institution that aligns with a particular form of logics change

Appendix C: Example Codes by Coding Round

Appendix Table 2

Example Codes by Coding Round

CH	Coding Round 1	Coding Round 2	Coding Round 3
Chapter 4	Example codes ● "Would not have survived" ● Emotional ● Defeated ● Intimidated ● Isolation ● Angry ● Second guessing ● Burnout ● Gaslighting	Codes refined and combined codes under ● Acknowledging Emotional Work ○ "Would not have survived" ○ Emotional work ○ Sacrifice ● Burnout/Fatigue ● Negative Emotions ○ Defeated ○ Intimidated ○ Isolation ○ Angry ● Gaslighting ○ Gaslighting ○ Second guessing	Placed codes in a category ● Emotional labor

Chapter 6	Ended first round with many codes pointing to the reasons things don’t change. Examples include: ● Reasons things don’t change ● Employees lack of knowledge or training ● Not given time for undocumented student work ● Role as receivers of information ● “generalists” ● “Small part of my job” ● “Staff not comfortable working with undocumented students” ● Stay in my lane	End of the first round ended with 23 codes under the category ● Reasons status quo does not change Categories also emerge related to this this category, including ● Visibility ● Capacity ● Financial Investment Through disconfirming evidence, I am finding cases where these categories are also creating opportunities for change	Went back into the literature on undocumented students and noticed some of the codes within the constraints on change were capturing “diffusion of responsibility.” Created the separate but related category ● Diffusion of responsibility Codes from the original 23 pulled into a diffusion of responsibility category ● Role as receivers of information ● “generalists” ● “Small part of my job” ● “Staff not comfortable working with undocumented students”

Appendix D: Examples of Practitioners' Experiences with Administrative Leadership as "Supportive But…"

Appendix Table 3

Examples of Practitioners' Experiences with Administrative Leadership as "Supportive But..."

Practitioner Role	Example Quote
Undocumented student support staff	"I think that we're trying to push other administrators and even our president to be more vocal. I do think all of them are supportive of undocumented students, but I think everyone does it very carefully…so we're trying to continue to gently push our administrators, vice presidents, and president to be more supportive and be more vocal about this issue."
Undocumented student support staff	"Our administration is still very conservative. We know we've got their support. Otherwise, they would've said, 'No task force for this,' or 'What are you doing with this task force?' We know that there's support for us to talk about the problem…Right now, I think if they were really supporting it, they would say, 'We're going to allocate some money for undocumented students, or for programming, or for a center.'"
Counselor	"I think that they're supportive in their own way. At least I want to think that they're supportive and that they're inclusive and that they take our students seriously. I feel like our college is supportive but I feel like there are so many other things that run the college like the numbers and it's hard to get numbers. It's like how do we give them numbers?"
Counselor	"I think it's openly friendly towards [undocumented students]. But not necessarily active in supporting the program or having structured support… if we talk about higher-up administrators, like going up to the president. They'll say yeah, we support undocumented students, but you know, that's kind of the right thing to say. But I don't think (sighs) – there's goodwill I guess in people, but I feel there really hasn't been anything to back it up."
Administrator	"While overall I feel our administration and our campus are very supportive, I still spend my time trying to find funding, right?... We don't have an established budget, either institutionally or even within any type of grant."

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