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**Identity Politics and Barack Obama's Immigration Reform: An
Analysis of his Autobiography *Dreams from My Father* and his
Speech *Immigration Reform Executive Announcement 2014***

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of the requirements for a **Master's degree in English Literature
and Civilization**

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Abstract

This research work attempts to explain the reasons behind Obama's immigration reform in favor of undocumented immigrants through the study of his autobiography *Dreams from My Father* (1995) and his *Immigration Reform: Executive Announcement 2014* Speech. This research reviews the history of undocumented immigrants in America, the concepts through which it explains the seeds of DACA, and its rejection in Congress. For this, the study relies on identity politics to unveil Obama's personal life experiences which seem similar to the Dreamers' ones. In fact, identity politics shortens the distance between both narratives and forges Obama's liberalism towards the Dreamers. Furthermore, the analysis of his speech shows Obama's confrontation with the Republicans who rejected his immigration plan and led to the failure of his attempts to amend the broken immigration system in USA. It also highlights the arguments Obama used to convince his rivals about the value of his immigration reform for him as a liberal Democrat President.

Key words: Barack Obama, Immigration Reforms, Undocumented immigrants, Identity

Politics, Republicans.

Dedications

It is my genuine gratefulness and warmest regard that I dedicate this work the almighty who gifted honest researchers with knowledge and wisdom, to the love of my parents, my brothers, and my close friends.

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General Introduction

The undocumented immigrants in the United States of America raised significant political issues in the American government especially during the Obama era. The 44th president of the United States, Barack Obama, showed his support for this category through his promise to provide them a pathway to citizenship during his two terms of occupying the office. His promise led to a new delivery in the American immigration policy called Differed Action for Childhood Arrival (DACA) which saved undocumented immigrants from removal and provided them temporal residence for two years.

Unlike the immigration system during 20th century, today, it creates many restrictions. American authorities maintained a vocal against undocumented immigration, and previous U.S. presidents deported huge numbers of non-citizen immigrants to their homelands because for them these people caused damages in the country.

The United States of America has been a melting pot since the first immigration of the Pilgrim Fathers. Its surface as the largest country in the Pacific Ocean has met with the ambitions of millions of immigrants from all over the world. The first undocumented immigrants were brought to America from the 1920s till the end of the Bracero program to work in the American farms and railroads. This was also an opportunity for them to afford an opulent living for their families left in their original countries. Since then, young children were carried by their parents crossing the U.S. borders and aiming for a better life. However, these young children have been in a red zone because they were not legalized. In her article *How Many Illegal Aliens Currently Live in the United States?* Spencer Raley states that there were approximately 12.5 million illegal immigrants living in America in 2017. These immigrants live mainly in the Mexican borders, California with 3,535,000, Texas with 2,482,000, and Florida with 1,279,000.

The majority of the non-documented immigrants involve in universities, economic and public domains, and Hollywood industry. Indeed, these young men oil the wheels of the American socioeconomic and political realms. Previous U.S. Presidents like Regan and Clinton made some reforms to facilitate their lives. However, during his first presidential campaign, Obama took immigration as a crucial issue in his political agenda and promised unauthorized immigrants to resolve their status handicap by fixing the immigration system. This could be explained by his liberal Ideology as a Democrat. In addition to this, in this study, we suggest that his life experiences and his background as an Afro-American and the son of immigrant could influence him to become more supportive to minorities including the undocumented immigrants.

Despite that the United States is known as a spot where a bunch of racial identities cross together, the American identity is one way of defining these groups, and it is based on the values and principles of being an American. Samuel Huntington, among other scholars, defined these principles as: freedom, equality between people, and individualism which refers to one's ability and willingness to work hard and succeed, and contribute to the USA, in addition to the right of a representative government. For these reasons, undocumented educated people and hard workers in the American society joined the Dreamers' organizations to manifest their American identity which is denied by the authorities. Furthermore, they call the government to consider their individual rights as full citizens since America, as believed and established by the founding fathers, is the embodiment of democracy.

When Barack Obama was appointed as the first African-American President of *Harvard Law Review* in 1990, he wrote his autobiography called *Dreams from My Father: a Story of Race and Inheritance* in which he portrays his life experiences from his childhood till adulthood. Moreover, he exposes his story of race in America and his self-struggle with his identity as being half-African and half-American. When Obama describes the stories of his

life, he mentions different stories of people from different races like Asians, Africans and immigrants coming to work hard and live the American dream.

It is worth to mention that Obama has become a model of the American success in today's history of America; he symbolizes for many Americans, mainly for the minorities, a new flame of the American dream. Indeed, his victory in 2009 presidency encouraged the undocumented immigrants to believe in their dreams since a "black man" whose origins from Kenya could once preside the country that practiced harsh slavery and hatred towards the Blacks. Also, Obama has always reminded the 50th States of America about immigrants who shaped the American ideals and character.

Obama's autobiography has been studied from different perspectives focusing on his racial identity as he claims the book is about. In his article "African Identity, Self and Other, in Obama's *Dreams from My Father*", Azza Ahmed Heikal puts Obama's memoir into post-colonial and postmodern perspectives dealing with racial discrimination and how he embraces different races so as to come to the realization of the clash" of the two worlds "Afrocentricism" and "Americanism". Thus, she asserts that "Obama's *Dreams from My Father* could be described as a journey across continents to trace his double race" (Heikal 251).

According to Heikal, the racial discrimination that the blacks survived in the United States persuades Obama to accept other racial differences as well as to work hard in order to unite them (248). With this in mind, his autobiography shows the dissension between the two worlds, Black and White, in which two cultures or two identities are collided; subsequently, this impuled him to look for a meaning to his life (Heikal 250).

For Heikal, Obama is influenced by the events that occurred around the world and coincided with his generation. This is apparent in his autobiography which refers to different

events like 9/11, the fall of the wall of Berlin, and Apartheid. Adding to that, Obama gives a clear description of the postmodern life during the 1960s especially with the rise of the civil rights movements and all the conflicts that raised the issues of “identity, race, gender, power and religion” (248). Furthermore, Heikal stresses another lucid theme from the autobiography which is the theme of hope (250); Obama’s autobiography describes hope of success despite the racial or inequality troubles.

From another lens, David Masty explores, in his article “Slumming and/as Self-Making in Barack Obama’s *Dreams from My Father*”, the idea of how the whites perceive Obama’s autobiography and activities in Chicago with the Whites and Blacks. For Masty, *Dreams from my Father* is characterized by multi-voices because of different races he mentions inside. Simultaneously, there is a sort of reconciliation between the White folks and the other racial minorities. Therefore, he does not only attempt to understand his ‘racial identity’ but also to trace back the American history of race (485).

Eventually, Masty tries to show the white readers’ positive responses to the style of *Dreams from my Father*. They gave it a chance to be heard because they see themselves as radicalizing other races through Obama’s daily life, since he is part of those suffering from the white folk. Besides, Masty thinks that the point which is often overlooked is that this autobiography does not target only the blacks; Obama does not show this as he demonstrates how much America needs to be united through its different races (499).

In a book chapter entitled “The Obama Effect on American Discourse about Racial Identity: *Dreams from My Father* (and Mother), Barack Obama's Search for Self”, Suzanne W. Jones argues that in an interview with Barack Obama on *ABC News*, November 11, 2007 where he received questions about his identity and belonging, he seems to belong to both Black and White worlds (132). That is to say, he is a hybrid person embracing both worlds.

She asserts that in his work, he explains how he fought for his “self “ or what she calls an “interior journey.” (132).

The above review of literature shows that Obama’s autobiography is about his struggle with racial identity and racism in the American society. In this research, we suggest that his experiences with discrimination and marginalization can be compared with the experiences of the minorities, namely, the undocumented immigrants because both struggled to realize their American Dream through the confrontation of the white folks’ stereotypes towards them. On top of that, Obama and undocumented immigrants came across several deterrents set by the American society because of their status which does not suite the White model of being. This is why Obama did not hesitate to raise their status issue which most congressmen and the White House shirk. He confronted both Democrats and Republicans to find common ground for helping the Dreamers to stay in the USA without fear of deportation while reinforcing the security border with high tech materials.

DACA is inspired by the first DREAM ACT which was released in 2001 and never passed as a bill in Congress. In 2012, Obama signed an executive order that provided Dreamers some level of relief from deportation under “background checks” which means one should commit to a good moral character. It also allowed qualified young undocumented an opportunity to work legally in the United States. However, DACA was rejected by Republicans who had the majority in Congress.

Obama announced his executive actions in the speech he delivered on November 20, 2014. His decision aimed to compel the Republicans to agree on the program and pass it. Subsequently, pundits released political analyses about his announcement.

The White House correspondent, Michael D Shear, in his article “Obama, Daring Congress, Acts to Overhaul Immigrations”, reports that the president’s used powerful

arguments about America as being a nation of immigrants which cannot deport 11 million immigrants, and his scripture verse refers to his experience with the conservatives who block his actions, and he alluded to his final years as a vivid and a powerful president. Moreover, Shear shows the Republicans plan to revenge on Obama's actions, which are considered as individual and authoritative, once they take the lead of Congress.

In her report, *Obama to Immigration Critics in Congress: "Pass a Bill"*, Rebecca Kaplan examines the speech arguing that Barack Obama's executive actions represent the American character because everyone is immigrant. She also reports that Obama's program was meant to reprieve over 8 million undocumented young dreamers of over 11 million undocumented from deportation, and this time, it aimed also to relieve their parents. In addition to that, Kaplan writes that Obama's actions, contrary to what the Republicans pretend, were taken under lawful study.

According to Kaplan's analyses, this plan would help both Dreamers to fix their illegal status and grant a free space to "the immigration courts" to focus on the coming immigrants who cross the borders illegally. Besides, she reports that while the majority of illegal immigrants received the news happily, others were less hopeful because of the limited number who will be saved; Kaplan says that "the order should have covered all of the estimated 11 million immigrants in the country illegally."

Ellen Uchimiya writes, in her article *Obama's Authority on Immigration...Or Lack of It*, that the Republicans disdained the President's decision; they took his actions to the extreme that they described his behavior as abusive. She adds that "Republicans became increasingly irate, accusing him of seizing the powers of a king or an emperor."

From the review of media commentators on Obama's speech, we can deduce the Republicans' backlash to Obama's executive action, and this reflects the controversy over the issue of immigration reform in Congress.

This research work aims to examine Barack Obama's personal experiences and political mindset which forged his immigration agenda (DACA). For this purpose, we study his autobiography *Dreams from My Father: A Story of Race and Inheritance* using the concept of identity politics. This allows to explore Obama and the Dreamers' parallel experiences of marginalization and perception of the American identity. Then we analyze Obama's *Immigration Reform: Executive Announcement 2014* speech in order to understand why Obama passed his executive actions, and why the Republicans rejected his immigration plan using Takaki's Master Narrative.

Identity politics is defined differently by political and cultural scholars. In this study, we rely on the definitions given by Renato Rosaldo, Orlando Patterson, and Taylor Charles. Rosaldo defines identity politics as a social movement which raises consciousness among the oppressed and excluded minorities sharing their stories of pain. Moreover, Taylor stresses that in identity politics, the minorities suffer from self-esteem and self-disdain, and Patterson defines identity politics as the rejection of being rejected. Therefore, for these authors, the process of identity politics starts with group organizations adopting liberal actions to move from personal pain to political engagement in order to show their role in society and to ask for equal rights and status' recognition.

Rosaldo also stresses that identity politics is used by proponents of Anglo-protestant culture to preserve their ideals. This accords with Ronald Takaki's definition of the Master Narrative of American history. Thus, Takaki's Master Narrative will be used in this study to

explain the conservative ideology of the Republicans who rejected Obama's immigration reform.

In terms of structure, our research paper will be divided into three chapters. The first chapter will provide the theoretical background of the study; it will introduce the history of illegal immigrants in addition to the important immigration reforms introduced in the U.S. government namely, IRCA, DREAM ACT, and DACA. Then, it will explain the concept of identity politics and the meaning of American citizenship which are related to the concept of the American dream.

The second chapter will analyze *Dreams from My Father* using identity politics concept to highlight the American dream in Obama's life, his racial hindrances, and his contribution to his community. Besides, through identity politics, we will draw an analogy between Obama and the undocumented immigrants to show their shared stories and experiences. This aims to demonstrate their common understanding of the meaning of American identity. Finally, we will deduce Obama's mindset which prompted him to support the undocumented immigrants.

The third chapter will examine Obama's *Immigration Reform: Executive Announcement 2014* speech, placing focus on the arguments he used in order to convince the Republicans to pass his bill. Additionally, it will explain why the Republicans stood firm against Obama's immigration reforms and why Obama passed his executive actions.

Chapter One: Theoretical Background: Undocumented Immigrants, Identity Politics, and the American Dream

Introduction

This chapter reviews the historical background of undocumented immigrants in the United States. Then, it puts them inside the conceptual mould of identity politics which explains the demands of the minorities, including immigrants who attempt to live their American dream despite its illusion due to the racial disparities. Accordingly, this chapter shows the seeds of ‘illegal’ immigrants and explains the concepts of American identity and the American dream.

1. Undocumented Immigrants and Immigration Acts

The phenomenon of undocumented immigration in the United States is traceable around 1920s when American companies called for the Latinos to work in their fields and farms. Then, immigrants started to enter the U.S. territory and overstayed their visas. Therefore, their residence in America became illegal despite their contribution, and this opened the debate about immigration reforms. The most recent ones are IRCA, DREAM ACT, and DACA.

1.1. The History of ‘Illegal’ Immigrants

The current number of undocumented immigrants living in the United States rages serious debates between the Left and the Right wing over the possibility of documenting their status. The fact that they are identified as “illegal” led Americans to disapprove their residence in America. Yet, history shows the reality of how immigrants became illegal.

Chomsky explains in her book *Undocumented: How Immigration Became Illegal*, the way the American government broke the hope of the Latinos to be naturalized, among them Mexicans, Philipinos, Salvadorians...etc. Her goal is to deconstruct the “illegality” or to “denaturalize” the state of being ‘illegal’ and the paradox of the immigration laws. The

difference between non-documented and naturalized immigrants is that they do not have their full rights as they practice their duties while the legal ones are treated as true citizens. As a reporter, Chomsky writes in her preface that she receives many comments from the naturalized Americans who ask her “Why don’t they just come here legally?”

The Latino immigration issue goes back to the beginning of 1920s when America and Mexico founded a shared business of mining in both regions. Briggs Jr states that this dual labor market permitted the Latinos to move in and out America freely without restrictions (4). Chomsky asserts that in this case, Mexico played a heavy role in the dual labor market in the United States, both domestically and internationally because they were productive workers. Economically, these Latinos were not developed like the Americans so they accepted whatever the conditions set by the American companies. Chomsky argues that Latinos were underpaid compared to the Americans, and for the most part, they also buckled down with their bloody efforts to build America’s economy without receiving any recognition by the American companies (Chomsky). Since then, immigrants did not stop crossing the borders, and this was a great opportunity for the American companies because they needed cheap labor force that is why they did not take it as a serious political matter.

To Gratton, during the Great Depression, the USA felt a burden in its society, meaning that, a certain category in it bore the result of the Great Depression and joblessness; thus, they deported many workers. Moreover, for Gratton, Hoover’s administration did not tolerate the Latinos, and deportation rose (955). Balderrama and Rodriguez assert that Americans considered these Mexicans as “scapegoats” which means that they were blamed for unknown wrongdoings (2).

Haverluk reports that American farmers invited the deported Latinos again under the Bracero program to work in their farms, mainly the Californian ones, (138-141). These lands

demand more cultivation and treatment in order to double the harvest. Mandeel says that the Bracero program was first issued between 1942 and 1964. At the beginning, they brought over 4million workers. After the Second World War, American economy was left with enormous manpower and labor shortage. On that account, more than 4.5 million Mexican citizens were legally hired for work in the United States, primarily in Texas and California (172).

Considering the fact that the Bracero Program came to its end in 1964, the Latinos immigrants became illegal because they remained there, and they had children who were born in America without the right papers which would legalize their residence; so, they involved in the civil rights movements which gave a start to a whole Latino movement called the Chicano movement. In the wave of all these movements to overcome different discriminations, the most stressful issue was the naturalization of the undocumented immigrants.

1.2. IRCA, Dream Act, and DACA

The U.S. government came with the Immigration Reform and Control Act (IRCA) under Regan administration in 1986 which naturalized 2.7 million undocumented people (Altangerel and Ours), and according to Chomsky, the Latinos were mingled with the European immigrants who were in the process of regularizing their status. This led to another reason to call them “illegal” because the act required documents as proof that one was already a laboring farmer, and the Latinos had to bring fake papers in order to stay in America (Chomsky). In the following decades, the farmers’ first generation left second and third generations who were stricken with the fact that their parents do not hold the Green Card.

Moreover, the U.S. immigration policy welcomed openly international students, tourists, and others. However, some of these newcomers decided to stay after their visas expired. Thus, they were associated to the Latinos as being ‘illegal’, and they had to live

under the shadows of deportation. Their fear and their contribution to the American life have propped them up to create the Dreamer community to ask for legal reintegration in the society; most of the Dreamers are students, writers, scientists...etc. Nunez reports that the Dreamer community is constructed upon diverse groups from Asia, Latinos, Europeans, Africans, and Australians.

The name Dreamer came after the DREAM ACT that was issued by the Democrats during the Bush era in 2001. The federal legislative ACT's ultimate goal was to protect the undocumented people from deportation, and provide a pathway toward citizenship. However, the DREAM ACT roiled Congress and got slumped by both Republicans and the White House. From 2001, Democrats had scrambled to pass the bill but it failed in 2010.

On June 15, 2012, President Barack Obama's campaign instituted Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) with the help of his secretary of Homeland Security Janet Napolitano by executive Branch memorandum. They excluded the fact that Congress rejected any negotiation over the issue of the undocumented people (Departement of Homland Security). Núñez reports that DACA could rescue over 800,000 undocumented people. It allowed them to stay in USA without being at risk of deportation.

When the Obama administration issued DACA, they set conditions in order to label whether the candidate is legible to benefit or not. The recipients should be under the age of 31 and not overpassing the age of 16 from the time when DACA was issued. The program focused heavily on students, people who engaged in army service, and those who have not convicted crimes. Despite the fact that DACA received many rejections from the Republicans, on November, 2014 Obama reinforced his program taking executive actions not only to insist upon DACA but also to include the parents of the recipients.

Therefore, the wave of undocumented immigrants has become a crucial issue in the U.S. politics. Yet, it is not easy to judge them by the Americans due to the belief that America is a land of immigrants at the same time a country of laws, and for this, several reformation acts were decreed to facilitate their lives. These immigrants have struggled with the pejorative connotation ‘illegal’ which remains a deep problem playing a role in the raise of identity politics to reclaim their American citizenship.

2. Identity Politics

Recently, identity politics is one of the raising concepts through which the minorities come under political alliances and community organizations to reclaim their rights of identity recognition. Among them, the U.S. undocumented immigrants who attempt to prove they are Americans and deserve the American citizenship that holds a set of values and principles defined by immigrants.

Maguire defines identity politics as a movement in which ‘ people of a particular race, ethnicity, gender, or religion form alliances, and organize themselves politically to defend their group’s interests. The feminist movement, the civil rights movements, and the gay liberation movement are all examples of this kind of political organizing’’. In her book, *Identity in Democracy*, the political theorist Gutmann defines identity politics as a tendency through which the minority reclaim for ‘public recognition’, and they do so by imposing themselves on the government. Moreover, Gutmann holds that in identity politics, the individual engages in civil actions to ask not only for recognition but also for freedom and equal opportunity.

According to Bernstein, identity politics emerged in the 1960s and 1970s within the civil rights movements when the oppressed groups held the beliefs in self identity (49). Identity politics increased their frequency to reclaim for social and political recognition. Bernstein

adds that identity politics is also defined within the context of multiculturalism because it defends cultural identities (51).

The Cultural anthropologist, Renato Rosaldo, describes identity politics as a social movement which gives raise of consciousness among the oppressed minorities. For him, identity politics unites the minorities' subjects like race, ethnicity, religion, LGBT community to share stories of marginalization, and how much they are victimized because of their identities and status. When these groups feel collective pain and depression from their exclusion, " They thus moved from a personal to a political consciousness of their issues" (119). The philosopher Charles Taylor defended identity politics in his work *The Politics of Recognition* through the politics of equal dignity in which the individual has right to be recognized and aim at equal chances without being dehumanized (27). According to Song, despite their social status, being a female, a black, undocumented...etc, these groups claim that they participate in the economic growth and political power of the country.

Hayward and Watson define identity politics as a public affair through which people demonstrate their experiences and political issues and identity oppression which refer to the exclusion from the opportunity right (9). Therefore, political analysis of the identity issue enquires on the way the government should take the minorities' identity politics, in other words, how it plans to solve the problems of many stories. Moreover, the authors stress that the "debate on identity was the rise of the so-called new social movements of the late twentieth-century, the focus of the key thinkers who launched the debate was "cultural minority" (10). For them " the politics of recognition" is a weighty concept in the politics of liberalism that most of the twentieth century philosophers like John Locke and mainly John Rawls call for the toleration of the minorities (11).

Phillips considers identity politics as a crucial concept and movement in nowadays politics. For her, identity politics defines most of the postmodern issues which divide people into race, gender, ethnicity, religion, and class. The exclusion of these groups leads to ‘poverty, inequality, and exploitation’ (36). Furthermore, she asserts that, as long as cultural differences exist in the society, there is no possibility to escape from identity politics because it raises these cultures’ problems. Besides, she adds that the more these cultural differences impose themselves in politics, the more it shapes danger for the majority because the latter is threatened to become minority (39).

Phillips, specifically, refers to the social stereotypes which create gender problems, for examples, society fears woman who enters politics because only male gender is capable of politics (38). The latter brings to mind the candidacy of Hilary Clinton to the U.S. presidency in 2016. Hovering around this, Maguire provides examples about identity politics which includes the Israeli-Palestinian quarrel over national identity, and each narrative defends its nationality and religious perspectives. She also brings up the conflict between the Protestants and the Catholics in the Northern Ireland, and even the Brexit as a form of identity politics which divides people into supporters to save the English culture, and the Whites’ economy, and people who disagree due to the exclusion of the immigrants in the country.

Hobsbawm states that identity politics emerged in America because of its diverse ethnic groups which are defined by immigrants. Moreover, he reports that the Jamaican sociologist and black female leader, Orlando Patterson thinks that those calling for their identity do so because they are convinced that they belong to that identity and have no other choice to choose another identity except the one they hold .

The minorities in the United States, including undocumented immigrants, negotiate for their identity politics as being Americans despite their status. Song highlights that ethnic

groups and Latino immigrants are the most parts which focus on identity politics; they ask for their rights to equal opportunities. Wolfe and Klaisen hold that identity politics highlights representation through activities, and it paves the way to discuss the immigration policy as it advocates “affirmative actions” because these immigrants foster the American economy (Quoted by Bernstein 52). In the same line of argument, speaking about the Latinos, Rosado underlines that “ the issues raised by the Chicano movement are not narrowly racial or ethnic. They are ethnical and political”, and the Chicanos or the undocumented immigrants ask for more rights like education, employment, and mainly “affirmative action” concerning their status. (120).

Identity politics encounters a mass rejection by conservative Americans. The American society opposes identity politics of the multicultural groups because it leads to division. Stepman reports that when immigrants ask for more recognition, they challenge the “Anglo, white male culture” because the United States is a cosmopolitan country which consists of “African-American, Hispanics-Americans, Asian-Americans.” For Rosaldo, the Whites also are inspired by identity politics because they feel themselves left out due to the union of the minorities against them (118).Therefore, the Anglo-protestant culture defends itself through the promotion of their ideals and principles in the American institutions and social life to maintain their conservative system, and this is what Master Narrative highlights. According to Rosaldo, this leads the conservative system to describe identity politics as a threat for democracy because it pushes the country into division. Thus, conservatives believe that they should conserve their culture through the exclusion of these minorities, and this exclusion is what created identity politics from the first place (119).

2.1. Political Enrollment/ Civic Education

Political enrollment or civic education is a worldwide concept which encompasses both political rights and duties for the citizens of a certain geographical area. Furthermore, civic education introduces to young generation the beliefs, the values, and the democratic perspectives of the country they live in. It prepares them for life citizenship. Rawls defines civic education as a relationship between the individual and the government within a “social contract.” (209). Therefore, civic actions grant liberty and equal rights to get rid of economic and opportunity inequities.

The American constitution dedicates straightforward lines about civic education to preserve democracy in the 50th states, and it is inserted in American schools where students take part through political activities. In this context, Owen highlights the importance of political sciences as a fervent stipulation in which a citizen must take part in; thus, to take part in political science as actions can be done through engaging in organizations, volunteering in fixing social problems, voting ...etc.

As collectively agreed by the American Democrats, the merit of citizenship is mainly based more on personal achievement and the contribution to the country than learning the values by heart. In other words, it is more about the productivity than the consumption of the norms; for example, instead of learning about the American dream or hard work ...etc, the focus should be on practicing them. In this sphere, Owen writes : “The emphasis during these phases of the discipline’s development fell more heavily on the production of civil servants than on teaching civics to the general public.” (5).

Furthermore, civic education directs the citizens to their political positions and mindsets through voting which defines a person as a citizen and worthy to earn citizenship of the country they reside in. Owen assumes that “Underlying the citizen as voter construct is the

assumption that voting is the single most important political act in a democracy.”(9). From this perspective, the country’s prosperity is constituted thanks to the shared services between the government and the public either through voting , or taking part in a military service which is a powerful act proving the citizen’s loyalty to his country. Therefore, when the individual is exposed to the American mainspring principles as well as embracing the culture and the tradition of the society, he/she is qualified to be part of the American society, and expects the government to maintain democracy like “egalitarianism, individualism, as well as those vested in the American creed” (Owen 8) without radical exceptions.

In 2006, America witnessed the hugest protests by immigrants who reclaimed their rights, their ethnic groups, and reject the restrictions taken by the House of the Representative against them. The protests were organized by immigrants defending their groups, religion and labor rights under a public political ground. According to the Americans, Latinos and Asians diminish the sense of civic education calling for destruction, civil disobedience, and they decline the civic engagement in the country. According to Ramakrishnan and Bloemraad, the American public opinion claims that immigration and ethnic diversification are undermining the civic and political vitality in the United States because of “the linguistic skills” in which the Latinos lack proficiency in English language; in addition to this, they make the public and political discourse in half Latin and half English (5).

Ramakrishnan and Bloemraad highlight how the immigrant organizations have had an impact on politics through communal work, enrolling as members of political parties, volunteering to build or to create clubs and associations (16).

2.2.American Citizenship

Following the view of civic education which is directly related to American citizenship, Huntington stresses that American identity is exposed to the prejudices of the racial groups

among them the Jewish, the Arabs, the Muslims and the Hispanics who are subdued because of the Americans' reasoning based on who they are, And who the others are (6-9).

According to Huntington, after the civil rights movements, the dominant Anglo-Protestant culture, which is a model that sets principles of the conservative American identity, started to fade away due to multiculturalism, and the fact that America became a diverse country. Moreover, the 1960s was followed with the third large wave of Latino immigration (18).

To understand American identity, it is important to understand why people migrate to America. Upon this, Huntington sets out two principles upon which American identity emerged. First, America is the nation of immigrants as already defined by Kennedy, George.W.Bush, Obama and others. The second is the notion of the "American creed"; this involves a bunch of political principles, ideals and faith which grant identity to Americans. He writes: "the common creed is said to unify the diverse ethnicities produced by immigrants" (37). This means that immigration institutes American society through their diversity, ethnic groups, and different cultures which concerted the America identity.

However, American identity was hugely challenged during the civil rights movements, and for the Latinos, starting from 1965, the American identity is shaped by a piece of papers (Huntignton38). Moreover, Richard Hofstadter claims that national identity is linked to political principles (Huntington 46). In other ways, American institutions politicized the principles of the individual, like human rights, freedom, and equal opportunities. They created certain political rules which govern these principles, and match with the Caucasians' principles, among them, prioritizing the White race and the European decent.

A lot of opinions aim to resolve the ambiguity of the American identity. This ambiguity lays between American ideals and laws. Song finds out that beyond the racial ethnicity,

gender or religion, the American identity is exclusively associated with the American ideal of “civic solidarity” (31).

Ultimately, the rise of identity politics in nowadays politics gives voice not only to people who suffer from the governmental decisions but also for undocumented people who are excluded. The Dreamers engage in political activities, and they commit themselves to the American creed and principles in order to justify to the American authorities their Americanism under identity politics.

3. The American Dream and Undocumented Immigrants

Reality shows that undocumented immigrants remain in America for the opportunities it suggests to all people who work hard, and who intend to succeed. This refers to the American dream which defines the American character and the American identity. Despite the fact that American dream sustains democracy through meritocracy system, it turns into an illusion due to racism which generates racial gap of wealth inside the American society. Moreover, unauthorized immigrants figure out that it is quite complicated to reach their full American dream despite their educational level because they do not carry the Green Card.

3.1. The philosophy of the American Dream

The American dream encompasses multiple stories of immigrants who came to America with a strong hope and willingness to succeed and become who they wanted to be. The world started to be attracted to the land they hear about as a free land, which offers unultimate opportunities under one condition that is one must carry the proclivity for hard work.

There have been different interpretations of the American dream throughout history. Common consideration of the American dream is the notion that, as long as all people are created equal, there is no fence which can stand against one’s dream to pursue “Life, Liberty

and the Pursuit of Happiness’’ as stated in the Declaration of Independence (1). The concept of the American dream was coined by Adams in his popular work *The Epic of America*. He defines it as follows: ‘‘The American Dream is that dream of a land in which life should be better and richer and fuller for everyone, with opportunity for each according to ability or achievement’’ (214-215).

Americans believe that the American dream impulses each individual to live a life of freedom, and enables him to purchase a house and an American car. Education is also another pillar of the American dream, and even being an American is considered as a privileged aspect. Rank, Hirschl et al portray the American dream as attainable, as long as the individual commits himself to hard work and perseveres in striving toward his goals (2).

The American Dream has become the most significant element in the American sociopolitical and economic life. Among other scholars, Ghosh views the American dream as an ideology; for him, it is:

A set of collective beliefs, attitudes, and values about what an ideal society should be like... the Dream is an abstract set of values about individual behavior. It is an ideology in the sense that it motivates a particular vision of the ideal life but this vision is not necessarily a collective vision, as is typical of a political ideology (14).

The American dream is the basis upon which America was built by its immigrants. These immigrants have traced dimensional views about it because of the different experiences they underwent. Ghosh holds that nowadays: ‘‘the belief in the promises of the American dream is particularly strong among immigrants and racial minorities’’ (2).

3.2. The Tenets of the American Dream

The concept of the American dream has progressed throughout the history of the United States. However, its roots are based on tenets which demystify the individual's worth of opportunity and create a competitive atmosphere. Ghosh establishes three fundamental factors in his description of the American dream: "individualism, equal opportunity and success" (33). He explains that the individual is totally free to choose what he/she wants to become; it is about self-reliance as well as self-motivation to work hard and achieve what he/she designs because equality opens widely the gates of success. Besides, he relates the individual's success to the family success because an individual can not enjoy his American dream in "isolation" from his family. This implies the importance of the family as another component of American values.

In the same fashion, Hochschild describes success as a wild competition between the individuals of the same society. In other words, it is one's victory upon other's failure (18). She reinforces the idea of success through four principles. In the first place and as commonly believed, the individual has the right to get the opportunity no matter the origins of his background, poor or rich. Most importantly is to take action and move forward. The second tenet is to "go for it"; in this phase, the individual should know what does he fight for to achieve. The third tenet is how to achieve success, which means that, there must be a certain strategy to actually "go for it". The last tenet is that the meaning of success in American society is related to the idea of uprightness or a "virtue" in the sense that success grants the individual worth inside rich society; thus, he/she will be seen as ethical and noble.

3.3. Meritocracy

Meritocracy is the core of democracy which conducts the American dream. Johnson provides another basic idea in the American dream which is the idea of meritocracy. She

argues that this concept conveys a systematic way to evolve basing on the ‘‘individual merit’’. This means, if someone is ready to receive wealth through hard working, he deserves to be rich regardless of his/her background (9). For Longoria, meritocracy is the governmental premium for individuals who accomplish well their work (3).

According to Johnsson, the process of meritocracy guarantees an ‘‘egalitarian system’’ (21). This means that the extent of one’s hard work decides how much he/she deserves to be rich and lives the American dream. One of the most important keys is the relation between meritocracy and education. Education is the arbitrary factor which distinguishes between people’s efforts because it is related to the level of the individual and his/her skills. Additionally, Brin and Karabel assert that ‘‘the American educational system has been a power-ful instrument for the dissemination of meritocratic ideology’’ (729).

3.4. The Illusion of the American Dream

All the aspects of American’s life may affect the individual’s faith in the American dream; the highest dreams of success may be affected by the smallest factors in one’s surrounding. In other words, one’s background determines whether the dream can be realized or can simply vanish, and leaves deception behind.

American minorities encounter constraints concerning their gender, race, religion and ethnical groups. Conventionally, the individual has the right to try his chance because America symbolizes opportunities, and if he has qualified skills, he deserves to win at any circumstances. However, it is not the case for the newcomers (Ghosh 121). In fact, undocumented immigrants have a chance to join American schools but they are not allowed to work in order to finance their studies. Thus, there is irony in the way the American dream is described, and the way it functions in the arena.

When the debate opens up about the rate of the American dream hope among Americans, it is noticed that immigrants strongly hold on this belief; they even exaggerate in doing so through embracing all the tenets of American values. According to Hochschild, immigrants wrestle day and night to survive even though Americans exploit them as machines addressing them with a language they do not understand. In addition to this, they discriminate them (229). In the same line of argument, Flippen and Parrado find out that the Latinos are not considered or valued in the United States; instead, they are discriminated (686). Therefore, the American dream which is considered as a reason why the Latinos cross the borders or overstay their visas disappoint their expectations due to the fact that it is twisted to the politics of papers and documents to get citizenship.

Eventually, the American dream is deceptive for the Latinos due to the white dominant race which gives unfairly preferential treatment to the legal European immigrants than the illegal Latinos immigrants. Moreover, they control the materiel of success either in terms of lawmaking or other means; thus, this creates inequalities in opportunities and a gap of wealth between the races.

3.5. Racial Gap of wealth

According to McKernan et al. racial gap of wealth is the disparity in the way wealth is distributed in the American society due to race; for instance, white families are usually wealthy than the Latinos and the blacks because of the number opportunities they receive.

Johnson also shows the gap of wealth distribution in the United States between the rich whites, and the minorities. Equal opportunity, in its proper sense, means that the economic and political systems give voice to minorities as majorities to start a business without discrimination. Adding to this, when the political and economic system encourage equal opportunity, the conviction in success becomes maximized. In other words, when there is

already at stake a stable politics which considers the minorities, the economic system offers the same opportunities for different social classes, either raised poor or already have a capital (wealth and investment inherited from the precedent generation).

Both of Hochschild and Jonsson agree that the American dream is tarnished with the political system, and unequal opportunity happens systematically. Johnson; for instance, presumes that although the American dream is the fundamental basis in America, it is not easy to grasp that there are groups who are more gifted than others not because of their individualism but because of their families' wealth (1). If we look at the case of illegal immigrants in the United States, most of them work hard and value the rules but they can barely come up over the poverty lines. Therefore, there is inequity in the way opportunity is bestowed because of race and status.

Moreover, Johnson argues that inside the American society, there is a huge gap of income between the Whites and the Blacks. This does not exclude the Latinos who also represent the minorities, and this is called racial gap of wealth (7). It is transferred from one generation to another. This means, the dominant circle of the American dream does not admit that there is gap of wealth between groups, at the same time, they maintain this "structure inequities" (Johnson 3). Therefore, inequality already started with the distribution of wealth, because only the ownerships and wealthy people can have access to the materials.

Despite the fact that America has attempted to close racial behaviors, its institutions function under a segregational system. This system tends to strip away wealth from the Latinos and the Blacks regardless the fact that this category pays more taxes than the Whites. The system maintains inequities inside institutions and mainly economy to dissuade the future of the minorities; subsequently, this category occupies tough labors while the whites hold the mastery over well-salaried jobs. According, when Americans expand their market and

preserve the opportunities for them, they expand discrimination against the Latinos (Flippen and Parrado 671).

Sullivan et al. write that the social disparities between the Whites, Latinos, and Blacks create the gap of wealth because of educational favoritism which privileges the Whites as a dominant class than the minorities. This factor contributes to the unfairness of wealth distribution among the races because, after graduation, the Whites get hired easily in high professional jobs than the Latinos and the blacks who struggle to gain a decent work (16-17).

3.6. The Philosophy of ‘‘ The King of Mountain’’ by Charles. D. Hayes

‘‘The king of mountain’’ is a concept coined by Hayes to describe the economic competition within the social structure to remain on the top of the top (18). Thus, to keep this going on, the Whites, who are the dominant race and the kings of the mountain, ‘‘push back’’ the minorities who try to come up. This ideology opposes extremely the American principals of democracy because legal competition must be within meritocracy. Hayes states that: ‘‘We are taught from birth that we are citizens of a democracy where equality of opportunity exists; we use the idea of merit to try to ensure equality of opportunity by measuring effort’’ (17).

Throughout his book, Hayes examines the relationship between ‘‘merit’’ and ‘‘value’’, according to him, these two notions are twisted through education i.e. in order to be valued in the ‘‘democratic inclusion’’, and be qualified to get an opportunity, importance should be given again to education because it grants the opportunities one merits. (21).

3.7. Education and Undocumented Immigrants

Education is one rudimentary path to keep faith in the American dream. When it comes to the undocumented immigrants in the United States, most of them attain a high level of

intellectuality thanks to education. However, even through education, undocumented immigrants cannot achieve their American dream.

Burke and Johnston state that undocumented students are relegated for their defective level in linguistics and low knowledge. They are considered by American teachers as a stumbling block against the Caucasians to progress (21). Both Irizarry and Kleyn question why such hindrance since America embodies dreams, and opportunities? The matter is engendered in the status of being immigrants or undocumented immigrants. In one of their interviews with a Latino junior in high school questioning his ticklish situation, Alberto is an undocumented immigrant who crossed the borders illegally with his family, and they took several jobs to work hard to live their American dream believing in America as a shared community and opportunities; however, their state of being illegal prevents him to pursue higher education (6). Alberto represents many cases when talking about this category of students in American schools. According to Irizarry and Kleyn, the syllabus of undocumented immigrant students is limited only to learn ‘‘ language and culture’’ (9).

Moreover, Irizarry and Kleyn hold that it is challenging for both teachers and students to correlate together. This is one reason why undocumented immigrant students are ill-treated, and their status is a handicap (9). This factor leads to racism in schools performed by teachers, and most of the time, they inspect them to wrong in order to hawk them and send them in ISS (In-school Suspension) (9). Therefore, the undocumented students need to be integrated into specific programs which fit their field of interests.

Irizarry and Kley interviewed Latino students about their status which prevents them to pursue their higher education and get a chance of a descent job; accordingly, they found that most undocumented students have very short access to the opportunities which American education offers to legal immigrants despite their competences.

Truax reported many stories in her book *Dreamers: An Immigrant Generation's Fight for Their American Dream* about young Dreamers who are socially motivated and active students. Nevertheless, their professional careers are exposed to a lifelong failure because of their status. One of these undocumented students is Mohammed from Iran, a victim of not being legalized. Mohammed was born in Iran, and his father was a mathematician. Mohammed's father went to study at Michigan University. After a certain period of time, his student visa expired; hence, he could not go back to Iran, and he remained in the USA. Mohammed grew in the United States. Later on, he became the leader of the Dreamers' Organization of the Undocumented Immigrant Resource Network. At the same time, he was a brilliant student who got high grades in high school. Mohammed joined college, however, because of his illegal status, the administration refused him despite his excellent grades and the letter of acceptance. Ironically, they required him to fix his "status" then come back (00:54:11). That is to say that, Despite Mohammed and his family's high level in education, he could not reach his American dream, and his case reflects most of the other Dreamers who strive to succeed.

Therefore, it is crucial to adopt an egalitarian system among legal and illegal immigrants in American schools due to certain shared subjects, like the American dream and the belonging to the American identity in order to coexist as American citizens. this is one raison why undocumented immigrants fight within identity politics.

Conclusion

This chapter has shown how undocumented immigrants, as a minority, are marginalized in the American society. The dominant race in America puts borders and racial hindrances against this minority in different schools and other domains to prevent them from reaching their American dream which allegedly incarnates the American democracy. Moreover, the

Latinos experience such isolation because of the history which criminalized them. Adding to that, this chapter highlighted the importance of identity politics for undocumented immigrants as part of the American minority. As a concept, it advocates the importance of shared stories within the minorities and political enrolment as a means to reclaim their identity recognition and Americanism. Thus, identity politics helps to understand the reasons and the beliefs of Barack Obama behind his immigration reform in 2014 as reflected in his autobiography *Dreamers from My Father*. This will be the concern of the second chapter.

Chapter Two: Identity Politics in *Dreams from My Father* and Undocumented Immigrants' Stories

Introduction

The present chapter aims to analyze the autobiography of Barack Obama *Dreams from My Father: a Story of Race and Inheritance* which reveals Obama's wrestle with racial issues in the American society and his self-struggle with his identity. This study will be based on the concept of identity politics to shed light on Obama's life experiences which reflect the tenets of the American dream in the land of opportunities, and his strive to succeed through education despite the fact that the Caucasians impede his way to prosper. This will also convey the analogous experiences of race and social contribution between Obama and most of the undocumented immigrants stories reported by William Perez in his book *We Are Americans: Undocumented Students Pursuing the American Dream*. This will help to understand their common perception of being American. Finally, this chapter will deduce Obama's conception of immigration in the USA, and how his personal life shaped his immigration reform.

1. Barack Obama's Biography

To understand the life of Barack Obama, it is important to shed light on his biography from his early life to his political career basing on *Dreams from My Father*.

Barack Hussein Obama was born on August 4, 1961 in Honolulu, Hawaii. His nickname is Barry. He is a mixed-race child from a Kenyan father, Barack Obama, and a white mother, Ann Dunham. His father was selected by the Kenyan leaden and American sponsors to be the first African student at the University of Hawaii to study econometrics (Obama 10). There, he met with Ann, who took Russian classes. They got married, and they had a son. Later, the father won a scholarship to carry on his PhD in Harvard University. Therefore, "the mother and the child stayed behind, but the bond of love survived the distance" (Obama 10). Obama's mother married again with an Indonesian named "Lolo" with whom she gave birth

to Obama's sister Maya. Obama lived in Indonesia for 3 years. Later on, he came back to America and attended Punaho Academy at the age of 10. Then, he attended Occidental College in Los Angeles where he became a brilliant basketball player. Then, he was transferred to Columbia University in New York where he got a degree in politics. With this, he became a community organizer in 1983 in Chicago. Later, Obama joined Harvard School of Law where he graduated as a lawyer and became politically active. In 1996, he won a seat in the legislature state of Illinois which opened him the gates to American politics.

The early stages of Barack Obama's political career are traceable to his role in Chicago. Chicago was the first political inspiration for Obama where he ascertained his capacities in politics and in his rhetoric discourses. The power of his speeches gave him credibility to run in House of Representative as Illinois Senator. Nelson gives an account about Obama's failure in Congress in 2000 because Obama contested "the congressman and former Black Panther, Bobby L. Rush".

Pettigrew reports that, in 2004, Barack Obama won against his Republican rival Jack Rayan due to his powerful address in the National Democratic Party (282). Following his success, Obama published his first book *Dreamers from My Father* and second book *The Audacity of Hope* in 2006 where he exposed most of his political thoughts and his socio-economic and political strategies which would conduct his campaign. In 2009, Georg.W. Bush's mandate came to its end after two terms; the United States was left down into the abyss of a great depression. In 2007, Senator Obama announced his candidacy to the presidential elections of 2008. In 2009, he vanquished against the Republican of Arizona John McCain (Pettigrew 283).

In fact, the U.S. chambers needed a new political breath, free from the conservative ideology looking forward to living a new age of liberal behaviors. Kitossa writes: "the

culmination of eight years of George. W. Bush's regressive regime, eight years of Clintonian neo-Republicanism and 12 years of Reagan-Bush full-fledged neo-conservative ascendancy, US citizens were battered, bruised, fleeced and in need of a redemptive figure'' (11). After his efforts rose in Congress and legislative actions, Obama's two terms in the White House as a president could save the American economy, and brought about new constituents.

During his first year in the House, Obama appointed Hilary Clinton as secretary of State, and Congress was controlled by the Democrats. Unger summarizes the first term of Obama in which he lugged new slants to the American economy and the Middle East affairs including Gaza, Iraq, Afghanistan, and Pakistan. More extensively, his actions emerged in public healthcare, and he discussed the gay and the abortion issues. Nelson states that Obama won the majority of vote in 2012 when he was bound to tackle social reform and to reduce joblessness to 5.1%. Adding to that, Obama dealt with the gun control, and moved forward new policies on immigration.

2. Analysis of Barack Obama's Autobiography *Dreams from My Father: A Story of Race and Inheritance*

Dreams from My Father is a memoir written by President Barack Obama when he was in laws school at the age of 33, and it was published in 1995 by *Times Books*. Obama's inspiration to write his autobiography evolved from all the events which occurred in his life. This memoir is divided into 3 parts: the first part is called "Origin" where he introduces his Kenyan seeds, the marriages of his mother, and his life with his grandparents, Toot and Gramps, in Hawaii. The second part is named "Chicago" which sheds light on his social activities as a community organizer. Section three is "Kenya" where he describes his trip to Kenya looking for his true identity. Obama's autobiography invokes the racial conflicts between the Whites and the Blacks who represent other minorities. Indeed, Obama's memoir exposes major themes of a man fighting against race to live his American dream, and the

importance of education, family, social contribution, and being American. In the following section, identity politics will be highlighted in *Dreams from My Father* to uncover the identical experiences between Obama and undocumented immigrants through stories of the American dream and hard work, stories of race and contribution to their country to reject the white conservatives' view and prove their American identity.

2.1.Obama and the American Dream

In his autobiography, Obama adheres to the American dream tenets which are mentioned in the previous chapter. He relates the events of his personal experiences to themes of American dream and immigration, race, and community organization highlighting the right of equal opportunity and identity.

2.2.Family and Hard Work

The journey of Obama started when he was in Indonesia. He lived there for 3 years (Obama30). His mother engaged in teaching English “to Indonesian businessmen at the American embassy, part of the US foreign aid package to developing countries” (Obama43). His mother had the opportunity to work hard in order to raise him. At the same time, she encouraged him to adapt in Indonesia. In fact, Ann became the first fountain of Obama’s wisdom; she instructed him “self-sufficient, undemanding on a tight budget, and extremely well mannered when compared to other American children” (43). Therefore, she is considered as the first spring of Obama’s belief in hard work. Ann extended her strenuous exertion for her “initial efforts centered on education,” she taught him English language for 3 hours aday (Obama 47). As an American, she intentionally instills, in herself and her son, sense of Americanism.

At the age of 10 years, Ann sent her son back to the United States because she was aware of the difference between the life chances of America, and what Indonesia cannot afford him. Therefore, Obama’s mother is a visionary woman; she traces her son’s fate “to be an

American’’ (47). Obama spent most of his adulthood with his grandparents, Gramps and Toot, who are repeatedly apparent in the autobiography and have strong impact in the self-construction of his personality. Gramps used to be a veteran in the Vietnam War. When he retired, he remained committed to hard work and opened a ‘‘ furniture business’’ (Obama 55). Moreover, he was an educated man who used to write poems while Toot worked hard during her career as a vice-president of local bank. Both of Gramps and Toot work hard to pay ‘‘the family’s bills’’ (Obama 56).

Obama narrates the story of Toot which was also part of his life regarding the lessons he generates from his entourage. Obama reports that Toot ‘‘ begins her career as a secretary, she works seriously with a motivational spirit, more firmly...she respects time of work’’ (56) in order to cover his birth’s fees. He describes the significance of Toot’s hard work and her willingness to offer a well balanced life for her family because family is one fundamental paradigm of the American dream. Furthermore, he mentions that his grandparents’ dream to own ‘‘ a house with a white picket fence’’ (57).

As it can be deduced, Gramps and Toot’s story helped Obama to conceive the meaning of hard working to fulfill one’s goal. Moreover, his future life seems like adopting the same mode of his grandparents because, even after his last presidency in 2016, Obama engaged in other activities and still remains active in Politics.

2.3.Obama’s Education and Race

Education is a basic aspect in the American dream to model one’s perspectives and knock for change. It is a means to realize success from rags to riches, and it is the pillar which measures one’s merit of success.

Punaho Academy was the first adventure of Obama’s American dream, and self-construction. More emphatically, Obama underwent several interviews as a child to be

accepted in the Academy, and finally, he succeeded. The Academy is specifically dedicated to wealthy children (Obama 58). Maranto and Mcshane stress: "Barack Obama was made by education. With an unstable family life" (59). That is to say, Obama did not derive from a rich background. For a child to be separated from his parents, notably, it is a personal challenge, and a self-courage to remain determined about education and success.

The Punho step marked the beginning of Obama's self-struggle to recognize his identity. Punaho environment impacted him negatively because of his race, which is physically significant. Moreover, he was wretched by the white racism which created lack of self-credit in his personality. He noticed that his teachers' question about his origins " brought a more giggles" (Obama 60). Thus, he flopped in awkwardness to announce his Kenyan origin.

However, Obama did not downsize his goals for the Whites' prejudices. Instead, he spent his time to intellectualize himself by reading about his origins and other African civilizations like "the Egyptians and the pyramids" (64); he searched for his identity within such books. For him, looking back to the African heritage could answer or assure his ambiguities about his origins because he was rejected by the Whites while his life emerged inside the white world.

After his graduation, Obama crossed the threshold of junior high school in Los Angeles. In this stage, he found a new cycle of friends from multiple races like Ray, Marcus, and Regina. Above all, Obama's ideas blossomed to a large composition of white man's disdain for the minorities. Barack's aspirations were enough grand to work hard, succeed, and take classes in college. However, the shadow of race escorted him in different stages of his life. He endured racism with his basketball coach who comploted against him (obama81). Consequently, he replied him with strong hostility offending the "white folks" (81). In this view, Obama became more alert about the whites who are still implemented with the past

history. In addition to this, the coach represents the king of mountain that creates a gap of opportunity among the minorities in the American society.

Following this prospect, Obama's close friend, Ray, reminded him prudently that if the coach or any white man tends to regard him with contempt, he will do so "because he had power"(95) while the minorities remain weak. Accordingly, the conservative White power eradicates intently the individual's motivation to improve his life.

Obama's friend, Frank, from another side, gave him a moral lesson about the college being more of a training center than an educating one; that is to say, the Caucasians sketch the American dream as utopian in schools and their institutions, and that equal opportunity is everyone's right. However, the reality shows that the minorities' freedom to attain full education and life uplift is cramped between their inequities (Obama 97).

Thus, the kings of the mountain instill a segregational system to disconnect the minorities from pursuing their American dream, and disparities in education creates racial gap of wealth which shows discernible bias toward power. Yet, Obama's ambitions were not rammed. More importantly, he tended to nurture his ideas about race and civil rights movements through by Ellison, Wright, Dubois, Malcolm X, and speeches of Dr Martin Luther King.

In 1981, Barack Obama moved to New York to study politics at Columbia University. His choice of philosophy and political sciences helped him to grow maturely and intellectually that he could recognize the value of the minorities in America. Obama's ideas engaged widely in race, and how the blacks and other minorities toil hard while the Whites dominate the American dream and remain rich. In the wake of these ideas, Obama engaged in political actions which align with his thoughts aiming at the garrison of the Black community as well as the minorities. Besides, he noticed how people in his university were allured with

his first speech in the rally. It was arranged with a careful strategy (105). It was meant to disregard the Whites' tactics to condemn their bias and injustice towards the minorities.

2.2.Shared Experiences between Barack Obama and Undocumented Immigrants

Patterson describes identity politics as a set of liberal actions against the political restrictions which target the minorities; for instance, exuberant thoughts, behaviors, and convictions by which an individual or a group of minority profess their recognition. He maintains: "it emerged as an emancipator mode of political action and thinking based on the shared experience of injustice by a particular group... it is the rejection of rejection."

Following this, *Dreams from My Father* divulges most of Obama's experiences struggling against different circumstances, from the absence of the father to racism in the American society, in order to succeed. These experiences contain not only the adventures of the American dream, hard work, and education but also his role inside his community to prove his American identity. Similarly, the Dreamers also sustain the same journey.

The story of Barack corresponds closely to the Dreamers for the ideals they hold; ideals of hope, hard working, and determination to succeed. On that account, his immigration reform speech 2014 awakened many stories to come out of the shadows and share their experiences. As both sides belong to the American minority, the two narratives grapple against the White system who rejects Obama, and the conservative Republicans who refute the debate about DACA. They adopted liberal actions and endeavors in order to turn out their politics of recognition as being Americans and social agents.

Perez reports different stories of young Dreamers who remind us of Obama's experiences. Penelope was brought by her parents to America at the age of 9. Her parents underwent several split-ups which affected her childhood. Moreover, they spent their life in America moving from one place to another "to develop sense of stability and belonging" (6).

Penelope succeeded in her academic school by excellence, and her parents tried constantly to work hard in order to sustain balance in their living and pay for her education because her dream is to move forward through education despite the fact that her illegal status seems forlorn.

Much equivalent, Obama persists in his autobiography on drawing faithfully the hard efforts of his grandparents to afford him education. He confesses that despite the racial obstacles he used to cause whenever they move, “they had sacrificed again and again...they had poured all their lingering hopes into my success” (Obama89). Likewise, Penelope’s willing to work hard and succeed through education rouses her inquisitiveness to find a way to realize her American dream. Therefore, she followed her friends’ advice of the same status; then she took part in “extracurricular activities” (Perez 7). Penelope was rewarded for her grades and her service for the community, and she came up with an overcrowded record of experiences working in different fields. However, she still frames her paths to realize her American dream by stages and carefully due to her status’ encumbrance.

For such reasons, Obama gave voice, in his immigration announcement speech, to the Dreamers whose families work hard to support their children’s career. Moreover, he appreciates “the courage of students who bravely come out as undocumented in hopes they could make a difference in the country they love” (Obama).

As a core belief and attitude, the Whites habitually craft offensive endeavors towards the minorities like the blacks and immigrants, especially, when these immigrants are undocumented. When Obama moved to Texas with Toot and Gramps, the neighbors did not welcome a family with a ‘black’ son calling him “Nigger lover! Dirty Yankee!”(Obama19). Similarly, Perez brings the story of Sasha, an undocumented girl who was discriminated by her teacher for her status threatening her: “you’ll never get an A in my class because you’re a

dirty Mexican’’ (64). At the beginning, she was impotent to accept her status handicap. Despite her deception, she still believed in the American ideals. Therefore, she started to work hard in her high school’s leadership where she became ‘‘the founding president of a student organization that supports undocumented students on campus’’ (Perez 67). However, the torment of citizenship pressurizes her and puts her in limited opportunities.

In 2015, President Obama welcomed a group of undocumented students in the White House. They came with high potential to share their stories with the President. Maria Praeli is one of them from Connecticut. She is an ardent and studious Dreamer who remains without official documents. This status impediment creates a low self-assurance in her personality. In accordance to identity politics, when the Caucasian society dismisses the group minorities, they lead them not only to lack of opportunities but also low self-esteem. Thus, these Dreamers ‘‘are condemned to suffer the pain of low self-esteem’’ (Taylor 26). Maria reported that she feels ashamed about her status (AFP News Agency). This brings to mind the embracing situation of Barack when the kids in Punaho School were jeering at his origins and his skin colour. Obama delineates that he spent ‘‘the rest of his day in daze’’ (60). Indeed, discrimination causes him complex in his personality during his childhood.

Therefore, Obama disclosed the politics of the White ideology, and this is significant in his autobiography; he criticized the conservative system which undermines other folks stating that ‘‘Whites are so heartless and devious that we can no longer expect anything from them. The self-loathing you feel, what keeps you drinking of thieving, is planted by them’’ (Obama 199). Thus, The feeling of indignity and self-degraded which are generated from the oppressive Caucasians internalizes the picture of inferiority to the deepest degree ‘‘imprisoning someone in a false, distorted, and reduced mode of being (Taylor 25). Subsequently, both narratives, Obama and the Dreamers, fall in the obstacles of self-demise.

2.2.1. Community organization

While talking about identity politics to highlight the importance of community organization, it is worth to mention that within the community organizations, people share their experiences of injustice. These people are ethnic groups who assemble to seek solutions calling for their identity recognition and citizenship because the conservative system marginalizes them. Rosaldo stresses: “The contemporary politics of citizenship need to take into account the role that social movements have played in the expansion of claims to rights, and recognition into new areas. One has to address not only issues of class and inequality, but also questions of belonging that arise” (176).

In 1983, Obama decided to become a community organizer after the expertise he had clinched in New York as an activist. For Obama, serving in the community gives a man sense of empowerment (obama134) since the minor communities are put aside. In fact, civic engagement sets relationship between the citizens and the government; it is a way to communicate with the government to ask for equal rights and recognition.

Leadership grants Obama the opportunity to fulfill the promise of Chicago’s American dream, as it is a means to understand what the community suffers from. Therefore, Obama pleads that his decision of organizing is “the promise of redemption “ (135). Following this, Obama was hired as a research assistant in the consulting house to multinational corporations where he became “the only black man in the company” (Obama 136). In that account, he worked with different backgrounds, and he aimed to mobilize those people who affected him with their stories of hard work and high expectations.

Barack planned to repair Chicago’s forlorn situations. In that way, he extended his social activities to work in collaboration with the churches. Therefore, Obama started to run interviews with people listening to their complaints which highlight unemployment, and

newcomers' issues. Obama admits that "I often listen to stories which describe people struggling to survive", people attempt to get a good upright mobility, or people who work hard to pay for "the college of education for the sons or daughters" (156).

In fact, these stories are stories of oppression which echo "the king of mountain" negative effects on the minorities holding the means of success. Along this, he came to conclude why the blacks and the minorities "hadn't climbed up the ladder into the American dream" (Obama 170).

One of the incidents that provoked a chaotic situation during his socio-political activism was apparent in Altegeld when his fellows decided to abandon because they have been working for two years in a vacuum. However, Obama's motivation persuaded them that they should prioritize their duties toward the kids and the teenagers who were dropout, and support them to gain access to the necessary knowledge like reading and mastering computers. He reminded them that he came because he believes "there were some people who were serious about doing something to change" (172).

In 1991, Barack Obama graduated from the Harvard Law School as a lawyer. He was appointed as the first African-American President of *Harvard Law Review*. Later, he returned to Chicago to teach constitutional law. At the same time, he remained active as a community organizer. His experience in Harvard expounded him to strategies which can bring the change he carved for to fix the education system. For him, education is a weighty promise. It moulds a progressive society. Obama is aware about the essence of education in providing instructions about the self-identity, community, and basically democracy. According to Moranto and McShane, Obama's belief in education raises when the "public education system wastes the talents of poor and minority students" (1).

For this, Obama's activities in Aletgeld sought to fix the social issues through exposing them to leaders, companies, and organizations to support him saying: "I had scheduled three meetings, hoping to find a job strategy that would meet the needs of people in Aletgeld" (179). Obama aimed at creating a certain vivid economy in his community in order to open the doors for investments. Therefore, he put forward his efforts to serve his community and gave it a voice.

Perez highlights a story with a similar potential to serve one's community and encourage them for education. Julia is an undocumented immigrant who was brought to US at the age of 13. Despite the difficulties she faced in learning English language at school, she got high grades through which she was awarded "Golden State Examinations Academic Excellence Award". Later on, she became a teacher of math, and she worked in "high school computer labs helping students to use internet" (125-126). Hence, Julia and Obama realized not only their American dream but also they could open opportunities to knowledge and education for their people.

When Obama reports about the shortage of his community, it is noticeable that the case of the African-American community resembles the Dreamers' case because they are excluded by the conservative system. In fact, undocumented students do not have the right to federal aid; some colleges do not welcome them as there are some states which forbid them to participate in community. Moreover, they do not have the right to work and no access to healthcare. Therefore, Dreamers community organize themselves into groups of organizations holding demonstrators and rallying over protection, equal rights for students, and mainly documenting their illegal status.

Therefore, identity politics draws one caricature in which it puts together both of Barack Obama and young Dreamers' patience for the American dream and experiences of

race by the White folk who creates gap of opportunities to keep these minorities in lower and regressed positions. Indeed, both narratives attempt to impose themselves on the master's rejection through their integration and commitment in their communities, sharing their experiences, and serving each other through social activities to contribute to their country.

Foremost, what stands as crucial is that in identity politics, being socially and politically active gives voice to Obama and Dreamers to call for recognition; it is a way to give their communities status and respect by amending it, and it is way to prove their American identity without tracing back to their origins, race, or citizenship status.

2.2.2. The meaning of American Identity for Obama and Undocumented Immigrants

As mentioned by Huntington and Song, the American identity is defined by immigrants, and this view grants Americans equal rights and opportunities which are supposedly based on the meritocracy system. This means that, the individual is worth to be an American for his patriotic deeds and achievement through education or community service and not by his place of birth. That is how identity politics comes to be vitally important for both Barack Obama and Dreamers to prove they are Americans despite the rejection of the Whites.

The status of being a political actor in society emerges mutual respect and self-assertiveness. Basing on identity politics, *Dreams from My Father* points at the racial experiences of Obama which play a basic role in defining his own identity claiming that “ my identity might begin with the fact of my race, but it didn't, couldn't, end there” (111) because the political corporation through the community organizations offers necessary voice to Obama and the Dreamers in order to unveil their identity as being truly Americans due to their contribution, and it provides a scale up to political authority which threatens the conservative system.

Following this, civic engagement prepares the individual for political future to be fully a worthy citizen of a particular country. In the light of Obama's assumption of his self-identity struggle, he considers his identity, relatively connected to more political participation and community life in Chicago. In fact, Obama explored his identity basically when he joined the Chicago community, and as he was surrounded with his multiracial fellows, he continually questioned where he belongs:

Whatever my father might say, I knew it was too late to ever truly claim Africa as my home. And if I had come to understand myself as a black American, and was understood as such, that understanding remained unanchored to place. What I needed was a community...A place where I could put down stakes and test my commitments (115).

As deduced from Obama, one cannot return to his original country. Even after his trip to Kenya, his identity rests in an unsuitable mould; this can be the same case for Daniela or the detained Dreamers to be taken to their unknown original countries.

Obama's decision to become an organizer is also a reaction to the demeaning view of the master race through his resilient and intellectual ideas calling for change. Basically, the community structures his way to find out his identity. For this, Obama believes that taking part in the socio-political matters of one's community promotes one's identity and citizenship. More importantly, the community requires commitments due to the shared experiences of different members of the society. Therefore, the civic engagement in the community is an essential debate in *Dreams from My Father* through which Obama traces his identity.

Community organization enshrines openly Barack Obama's identity and belonging, as he claims: "I saw African-American community becoming more than just the place where you'd been born or the house where you'd been raised ... I believe that it might, over, admit

the uniqueness of my own life'' (134-135). Thus, the community counts as a shelter amid his confusions which haunted him, and it turns out to be the voice through which he shares his identity politics through liberal thoughts. More crucially, it is the home which gathers different stories of "the larger American community, black, white, and brown" (Obama 135). That is why Rosaldo focuses on the importance of identity politics within the political engagement inside the community stating: "the process of identity politics has more to do with participation in new social movements" (119) so as to be able to reclaim their rights of recognition as being Americans as the white men are.

For most of the time, Obama admits that his story could have never existed elsewhere except in America because it is the nation of immigrants, and it can shape everyone's story as it did with his father and him. Obama's story translates hope and success in the land of opportunities and values. Surgrue argues: "Obama's victory will open up extraordinary opportunities to the next generation" (11). Therefore, after his keynotes address in the National Democratic Party 2014, people started to show the importance to his autobiography that is a story of every American who works hard to be part of the American society.

Beyond the political engagement to manifest their American identity, Obama and Dreamers believe that being an American is not basically determined by the skin color or the right papers; instead, American identity is related to one's patriotic deeds and contribution as mentioned in the first chapter. In this regard, Obama says in his memoir that "respect came from what you did and not who your daddy was" (79). In fact, Obama describes his life as any American who embraces the American ideals, and who lives his American dream leaving valuable achievements to his community. After a long time of struggle, he could engage in politics as Illinois senator, he got married, "bought a house, blessed with two gorgeous, healthy, and mischievous daughters, and struggle to pay the bills" (Obama viii).

While announcing his executive actions in 2014, Barak Obama admits that the undocumented immigrants work hard to support their families as Americans do. He carries on that: “ their kids are American-born or spent most of their lives here, and their hopes, dreams, and patriotism are just like ours... they contribute to America’s success.”

From the same scope, the filmmaker and the CEO of *Define American* Organization, Antonio Jose Vargas, came out from the shadows to describe what it means to be an American. In one of his keynotes addresses Vargas defines being American by “the root causes of immigration” in America. He accentuates that he lives the American dream; he could build a career as a Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist in Washington post, a successful filmmaker, and an author who pays taxes and contributes to America’s success.

Therefore, *Dreams from My Father* is an act of dismissal against the White folk who considers the African-Americans “as bunch of niggers” (Obama 246). It is the duplicate case for the Dreamer community’s achievement like Antonio Jose Vargas who is the first undocumented activist launching an organization opening the door for his people to be defined as American. His speeches, films, and writings reject to be identified as ‘illegal’ because as he argues: “actions are illegal not people.”

In the same line of arguments, both of Barack Obama and Antonio Jose Vargas agree that American identity lays in the reasons why immigrants choose America. It is the result of the immigrants’ principles which bind them together.

3. Obama’s conception of DACA

Former President Barack Obama, as a politician and a policymaker initiating DACA, and confronting the Republicans, was deeply influenced by the events which happened in every stage of his life. Obama quotes from Faulkner: “the past is never dead and buried-it isn’t even past”. Following that, he was touched by his past and his stories of powerless

people in Jakarta and Chicago Southside (x). Kloppenburg argues that from the institutional studies to the White House, all form Obama's personality in addition to his surrounding that played a role to determine the way he thinks (9-10).

3.1. Obama and the Belief in Immigration

In his speech, while defending his policy DACA, Obama says:

For more than 200 years, our tradition of welcoming immigrants from around the world has given us a tremendous advantage over other nations. It's kept us youthful, dynamic, and entrepreneurial. It has shaped our character as a people with limitless possibilities -- people not trapped by our past, but able to remake ourselves as we choose.

From this, we can deduce that Obama generated his beliefs about America as a land of immigrants from the stories of his grandparents and his father who also is an immigrant coming from Kenya for a better life. Obama spent most of his childhood with Gramps, and he describes him as "an American character, one typical of men of his generation, who embraced the notion of freedom and individualism and the open road without always knowing its price" (16). Thus, growing up with a "free thinker and bohemian" (Obama 19) instructs him not only on how to turn out as a liberal politician but also how to work hard to succeed in life despite the circumstances' nature. Besides, Obama learned from his personal experiences as a financial writer to the first black American president the merit of every hard attempt to thrive, as he acquired how to build the belief in one's potential to achieve his goals in "the land of opportunity and dreams" (Obama 277).

For Obama, as these undocumented immigrants embrace the tenets of the American dream, they merit to earn American citizenship because "the values of hard work and

individual initiative turn out to have depended on a system of belief that's been scrambled by migration'' (Obama183). Therefore, Obama's policy is built upon meritocracy system through which he values hard work as implemented by the stories of immigrants, and every hard work should be rewarded in the land of immigrants that is why he decided: "I'll make it easier and faster for high-skilled immigrants, graduates, and entrepreneurs to stay and contribute to our economy, as so many business leaders have proposed".

3.2. Obama as a Multiculturalist

The childhood of Barack Obama was exposed to a multicultural environment. Obama grew up in Hawaii which was kept by the "Japanese, Chinese and Filipino immigrants" (Obama 23). It is a home for all sort of races, rituals, and cultures. In his text, he writes: "the legend was made by Hawaii as the one true melting pot, an experiment in a racial harmony" (24). This means, Obama fits with different ethnic groups, and different languages. He mentions that he loves joking in Spanish language with his Puerto Rican neighbors (3). Therefore, growing in a State crowded of cultures increases Obama's openness to the minorities which justifies his decision to support the Chicanos bringing the undocumented immigrant issue again into the oval office.

One of the stories which marked Obama is when he had a trip to Harlem. His friend Sadiq who was an illegal immigrant overstaying his visa looking for a better life, offered him his flat to spent few nights there when he could not afford it (Obama118). Despite the fact that Sadiq and Obama shared different views about politics and life, their friendship was built upon respect. Following this, Obama gives insight about the friends with whom he shares his ideas confessing: "I choose my friends carefully, the more political active black students. The foreign students. The Chicanos" (100).

Therefore, it is remarkable that Obama had strong connections with the minority class and more interestingly, the Chicanos, which means, DACA is a product of Obama's liberal ideas and open minded attitudes that are derived from the coexistence and sense of union with other races.

3.3. Lessons from Chicago

Referring to DACA, the background of Chicago plays an effective role in Obama's political ideas at a moment when he considers undocumented immigrants case. Moreover, the memories of his life give him insights, and offer him political schemes whenever he decides on something political because community is the starting point of Obama's dream to forge new change. He claims that:

Becoming an organizer was a part of that larger narrative, starting from my father... my mother and her parents, my memories of Indonesia within its beggars and farmers... through Ray and Frank, Marcus and Regina, my move to New York... I can see that my choices were never truly mine alone (Obama134).

Hence, the choices of Obama are derived from the experiences of each stage of his life, and one important idea to remember is that his mother influenced him. She used to bring books about the civil rights movements. Furthermore, she was a volunteering activist (Obama xi). Therefore, the influence of Obama's mother, his family and his entourage is also reflected in his decisions. For this, Obama becomes an activist in the civil rights movement. This role shortens the distance between him as a leader and ordinary people.

As a matter of fact, Obama claims in *Dreams from My Father's* preface that he is aware about the pain of people he encounters from his childhood till adulthood, the pain of Indonesian people and mainly, the pain of Chicagoans who try to prove themselves. As a

community organizer, he learns how to be closer “to the centers of people’s lives” (Obama 188). He puts himself inside others’ shoes; thus, he took the same attitude towards the Dreamers because he was once an immigrant and a son of immigrant. He mentioned in his preface that he is aware about people’s pain and shortage, and all his observations to the world around him encourage him to choose a “job closer to the streets” (Obama 139).

As mentioned in the previous chapter, most of the scholars who regard the politics of recognition claim that the minorities need tolerance. This is clearly apparent in Obama’s speech taking undocumented immigrants as part of the American society. Following this logic, former President Obama is distinguished from other American presidents for his typical tolerance with regard to undocumented immigrants thanks to his understanding of the civil rights movements, his observation, and his interaction with the Dreamers. To prove this, he reveals in his speech about his coming trip to Las Vegas to meet a Dreamer student “Astrid Silva” whose unfortunate story affects Obama. Therefore, this shows how Obama welcomes undocumented immigrants, and he listens to their lives’ restrictions in university, traveling programs, health insurance, and their future which is under the eve of slipping down the failure because of the Green card. Indeed, this leads to one primary aim which is change.

Obama intends to contribute to change his community and open opportunities for people willing to fulfill the American dream through fixing the White ideology which disables the minorities to move forward. Hence, he stretches the same attitude with the immigration policy. The evidence which justifies his decision is that Obama views the American politics so corrupted that he aims for change from the “grass roots.” (Obama 133). If DACA was decreed as one of the most persisting immigration policy in the American history, it would have been the ascent of “the need for change. Change in the White House... change in the Congress, compliant and corrupt.” (Obama133).

On that account, this led Obama to invite the American chambers while announcing his executive actions in 2014 to deal with the undocumented immigrants issue with compassionate debate. Obama's executive action on immigration reform DACA is a tolerate policy which comes out of the democratic and psychological relationship between the governor and the undocumented immigrants. Thus, DACA saved many recipients who found their leap of faith to work permanently, joined high education, got a driver license, and not being deported.

Conclusion

This chapter has attempted to bring both former President Obama and the Dreamers closer in order to understand the reasons which lead to DACA through a multitude of experiences of hard work, race, and the American dream within identity politics. This uncovers their parallel view about American identity. Basing on these aspects, this chapter shows that Obama's immigration policy is gleaned from his beliefs in immigrants, his awareness about the undocumented people contribution, his childhood which shaped his liberal ideas as a multiculturalist, and more importantly, his experiences in Chicago. The analysis of Obama's immigration speech 2014 in the third chapter will attempt to reveal about the reasons which prevented the procession of his plan, and why he adopted his executive actions to reinforce his immigration bill.

Republicans

Introduction

The present chapter attempts to study President Obama's speech *Immigration Reform: Executive Announcement 2014* speech in which he focused on his immigration plan to secure not only the U.S. borders but also to relieve again undocumented immigrants from deportation, and extend the renewal application. Moreover, it will examine the reasons why Obama failed to pass his bill into a law, and shows the arguments he used to convince Congress to pass his immigration reform. Finally, the chapter sheds light on the importance of immigration reform for Obama which led him to announce his executive actions.

1. Analysis of Obama's *Immigration Reform: Executive Announcement 2014* Speech

As mentioned in the first chapter, in 2012, Obama extended the Dream Act into Deferred Action for Childhood Arrival (DACA); this plan tended to grant path to citizenship to young Dreamers under background check, paying a fine and taxes to be able to work temporally, and it aimed to avoid deportation. The bill could save 8 million recipients, among them, students, workers and those serving in the military with two years renewal. However, the Republicans stepped firmly against DACA, and the majority of Congress refused to pass it as a law.

Therefore, in a speech of 15 minutes, on November 20, 2014, Obama adopted his presidential authority, like previous presidents who had right to issue reforms, to announce his executive actions after many failed attempts to pass his bill.

Obama opened his speech referring to America as a land which has welcomed immigrants for more than 200 years due to the opportunities it suggests, and he called up the origins of

the American people from a religious perspective and ethical mode. He reminded the Republicans that immigration shaped the American character. Then, he moved forward to describe their American broken immigration system, and that undocumented people played with the rules, and thus, they should pay for their illegal act of crossing the borders.

Obama set an arrangement of arguments while addressing the Republicans. He made it clear in his speech that his executive actions aimed to prioritize families, students, and committed individuals to hard work because this category has a positive impact on the U.S. economy. He also highlighted his administration's actions to fix the immigration system in order to persuade them about his awareness that he worked on the same plan that they suggested. He reminded them that his policy also reinforced the security borders with high technology and more patrols with a deportation plan.

Obama's challenging the Republican's conservative ideology indicates the importance of the bill for him as a liberal Democrat President. Specifically, this announcement confronted the Republicans' xenophobic view towards the Latinos which stems from their strict convictions to preserve the Anglo-protestant culture or what Ronald Takaki defines as the Master Narrative of America.

1.1.Obama VS the Republicans

President Obama announces in his speech that:

Meanwhile, I worked with Congress on a comprehensive fix, and last year, 68 Democrats, Republicans, and independents came together to pass a bipartisan bill in the Senate. It wasn't perfect... Had the House of Representatives allowed that kind of bill a simple yes-or-no vote, it would have passed with support from both parties, and today it would be the law. But for a year and a

half now, Republican leaders in the House have refused to allow that simple vote.

The Republicans extremely endorsed the security border since the attacks of 9/11 which strongly marked the Americans. Besides, the Bush administration launched the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) in 2001 as a reaction against terrorism and an act of relief from expected attacks, as it aimed to terminate asylum seekers and illegal immigration. In this regard, Bruno stresses that when Obama run for the elections in 2009, he pledged that his first concern would be citizenship to the Latinos. However, Congress opposed this, and DHS could never accept temporal residence (1-4). This can convey that DACA seemed to challenge the role of the DHS, which was issued under irritable circumstances because both of them function at the federal level. Therefore, Skrenty and Lopez hold that “the Obama administration never had the authority to implement DACA” (75). That is to say, DHS was the service which set strict criteria for the Latinos to be legible to apply for DACA.

Obama said: “Now, let’s be clear about what it isn’t... It does not grant citizenship, or the right to stay here permanently, or offer the same benefits that citizens receive-only Congress can do that. All we’re saying is we’re not going to deport you.” It is important to mention that, at the beginning, when Obama was about to initiate DACA, he planned to open a pathway to citizenship to the Latinos, and he could have granted them Green Card through series of comprehensive actions. However, when he came to the office, he had to work in collaboration with DHS issuing a fine and tax payment. Despite the fact that undocumented immigrants were compelled to pay taxes with the law wages they earned, the promise of Obama to the citizenship mollified their fear, and they received the news with hope to be naturalized. Yet, Obama did not maintain his promise to citizenship, and the taxes did not aim to change the Latinos’ status or grant them their rights as it was believed he would change their situation due to his limited authority.

In fact, the Republicans maintained vocal in their opposition to pass the bill, and they criticized Obama's immigration reform. According to Masters, the Republicans viewed that Obama's bill would cost extra budget with the other bills he already reinforced in the public policy. When the unauthorized individuals apply for DACA, they will have access to Medicare, social security, drive license, and for the Republicans, this will cause a loss in the budget. Besides, Vollp reports that Congress considers that Obama's plan violates the fundamental concept of the U.S. constitution (391).

The Republicans' refusal of Obama's plan was based not only on Congress' deficit to fund the bill but also it evokes their conservative ideology.

1.2. The Conservative Republicans' Rejection of DACA

The Republicans' view against the undocumented immigrants, and their rejection of Obama's immigration reform could be explained with the concept of Master Narrative of America developed by Ronald Takaki in his book *A Different Mirror* (1993). Ronald Takaki holds that:

The Master Narrative's narrow definition of who is an American reflects and reinforces a more general thinking that can be found in the curriculum, news and entertainment media, business practices, and public policies. Through this filter, integrations of ourselves and the world have been constructed, leaving many of us feeling left out of history and America itself. (5)

It appears that the Republican Party stems from this conservative Master Narrative with an imposing politics. The conservatives extremely hold in the principles of the Anglo-protestant culture, and throughout history, they highly regarded the European ethnic groups as the first dominant race in America. Furthermore, they promote in different fields the belief that the Anglo-protestant culture is the native mainstream culture of America, and other races

are considered minors who should adhere to their principles. Therefore, the Republicans' ideology affects the public policy mainly the influx of the undocumented immigrants.

For most of the time, the Master Narrative is haunted with xenophobia which is at the core of the conservative Republicans towards the unauthorized people. Yakushko defines xenophobia as a "fear and hatred" towards the immigrants; it is also generated from the feeling of one's superior culture (44). Hence, xenophobia is among the reasons which lead the conservatives to reject DACA. This is underlined by Dorsey and Barriga who explain that among the conflicts Obama faced in the White House to pass his immigration reform was that the conservatives deem patriotism in their ideals, their country, and most importantly, in their own people. For them, the American market should serve only true Americans. The second hindrance is the competition of the Latino culture with the Anglo-protestant one (91). The Republicans fear about the cultural competition in America, and they believe they may lose their principles and identity which they have always conserved. As Ronald Takaki puts it:

Today, our expanding racial diversity is challenging the Master Narrative. Demography is declaring: Not all of us came originally from Europe! Currently, one-third of the American people do not trace their ancestries to Europe; in California, minorities have become the majority. They already predominate in major cities across the country-Boston, New York, Chicago, Atlanta, Detroit, Houston, San Francisco, and Los Angeles. (5)

One argument which may support this idea is that, during the 1920s, the black culture rose when the whites welcomed warmly the Jazz music. Today, history may repeat itself with the Latino culture knowing that it is ranked as second culture in America after the Whites. As a matter of fact, lots of Americans are attracted by this culture, and this could be noticed through media. Indeed, the Latino market portends the Americans to take over their market.

Additionally, undocumented immigrants, who claim their right to American citizenship under identity politics, threaten the Anglo-protestant culture and their ethics.

The argument which may support the previous idea is that the Republicans view that if they approved the Latinos' status granting them citizenship, they might aim for more political power. As a reaction, the conservatives defend their Master Narrative beliefs under identity politics rejecting all kind of immigration reforms which would tolerate the undocumented people. This is stressed by Buchanan when he holds: "democracy is not enough. If the culture dies, the country dies" (Quoted in Dorsey and Barriga 93).

Republican Views posts on their timeline that they reinforce the immigration laws and the laws which pretend liberality towards the undocumented people because they affect negatively American hard workers. This is why they opted for penalties to American employees who hire them. The Republicans believe that these undocumented steal the jobs of their people, and also, they associate crimes rate to them. Consequently, they view that the "security border" should be reinforced with lot of patrols and high tech materials.

From a Master Narrative's perspective, the Republican's animus over the Latinos spills over American daily life through different ways, and largely, the press coverage. The negative portrayal of the Latinos through the press leads to the rise of anti-immigrants groups. The press manipulation fuels the war between the Latinos and legal citizens. Menjivar argues that media shapes the "public's view of immigrants" through discriminated "discourse of politicians" (604). One example is the conservative host in *Fox News*, Laura Ingraham, who skirmished along undocumented immigrants against the Democrat, Dick Durbin, who defended Obama's immigration reform in 2014. Ingraham considered that Durbin demolished the "American citizens" to work tough jobs. Mostly often, *Fox News* reports undocumented

immigrants' crime, and calls them 'illegal' to justify the Republicans' longing to bolster deportation and security border.

It can be deduced that President Obama faced the Republicans' authority with his beliefs in immigration and American identity on one hand. On the other hand, the announcement of his executive orders was perceived by the Republicans as offense for their control in Congress and attempt to exceed their Master Narrative ideology. This explains why Obama delivered a careful address to be able to convince them.

2. Obama's Arguments to Pass his Immigration Reform Bill

While delivering his speech, Obama used some of the conservative discourse in order to persuade his rivals to pass his immigration bill. He defended his plan trying to show the legislation of DACA, the importance of undocumented immigrants, and DACA in the U.S. economy. He also used biblical elements and evoked his previous achievements to secure the country from the criminals.

2.1. DACA Conformity to the U.S. Constitution

In his speech 2014, Obama says:

Even if we are a nation of immigrants, we are a nation of laws. Undocumented workers broke our immigration laws, and I believe that they must be held accountable. Especially those who may be dangerous...families who enter our country the right way and play the rules watch others flout rules...all of us take offense to anyone who reaps the rewards of living in America without taking on the responsibilities of living in America.

In this quotation, Obama intended to confirm that undocumented immigrants play with the chances of legal people, while in fact, the latter take into account the American laws.

Discernibly enough, his announcement seems to flip through the Republicans' view against the undocumented people. This argumentative strategy aims to win the Republican's voice. Dorsey and Barriga stress that the conservative voice consider 'illegal immigrants' as individuals opposing the rules of the U.S laws (92). Thus, Obama confesses: "I know some worry immigration will change the very fabric of who we are, or take our jobs, or stick it to middle-class families at a time when they already feel like they've gotten the raw deal for over a decade. I hear these concerns. But that's not what these steps would do." Through this, Obama assures that the Latinos broke the rules and enter the US illegally. Moreover, he shows his concern that the Latinos must carry the responsibility of their actions, the actions which played with true Americans' future because they illegally benefit from the jobs which should be kept for the Americans.

After having thrown light on his liberal stance towards them, Obama's discourse also relies on accusation for those immigrants as being criminals and portends the national security border. This means that Obama uses the language of his rivals in order to show that even if he is a liberal but he does not subside with the 'criminals' to be able to convince Congress.

Accordingly, Obama aimed to demonstrate that he was aware about the U.S. laws, and this gives credibility to his plans which unveil that he put the unauthorized individuals in a compelled position to respect the U.S. laws by paying taxes plus a fine. For him, this could purify his bill to look as lawful as other laws.

2.2. Obama's Reference to the Bible

Religion is significant in American politics especially for the conservatives. This is why Obama fused his political address with the religious element when stating: "Scripture tells us that we shall not oppress a stranger, for we know the heart of a stranger –we were strangers once, too."

Considering the fact that the conservative Republicans are conformist to the Anglo-protestant doctrine, Obama supported his address with biblical verse from Exodus (12:49) which refers to the story of Israeli and Egyptians as theologized in the American history with reference to the first puritan settlers in America.

Hence, this verse plays a dual role in Obama's argumentative discourse. On the one hand, Obama reminds the Republicans that all Americans are "strangers" in the land, either citizens or non-citizens, including the undocumented immigrants who came to America as their ancestors. On the other hand, Obama argued that immigration binds the American ideals shaping the American identity. In a way, while using such argument to support the undocumented immigrants and his bill, he seems to venture the Republicans' Master Narrative believing in themselves as the only race who have all the rights to claim "we are the Americans".

2.3. The Importance of Undocumented Immigrants and DACA for the U.S. Economy

President Obama declares in his speech:

Our history and the facts show that immigrants are a net plus for our economy and our society. And I believe it's important that all of us have this debate without impugning each other's character... Are we a nation that educates the world's best and brightest in our universities, only to send them home to create businesses in countries that compete against us? Or are we a nation that encourages them to stay and create jobs here, create businesses here, create industries right here in America?

The belief in America as "a City upon a Hill" is an initiative basis for the America's future to be a vigorous competitor and first rival in the world's economy. For the conservative

Republicans, competition is weighed up as a means to success and power. In this regard, competition and power are the headlines of the Republicans.

From this, Obama's statement confirms that despite the fact that undocumented immigrants are convicted to crimes and to steal the jobs of Americans, they are a net plus for the U.S. economy. He highlighted a strong point arguing that these undocumented immigrants are educated in American universities, and American institutions should better retain them to create jobs and business instead of deporting them.

Therefore, with DACA, the recipients would invest their acquired knowledge for America's interests; this justifies in a way the advantage of his immigration reform which works under the "background check" prioritizing valuable Latinos. Following this, Obama said: " We'll prioritize, just like law enforcement does every day."

Thus, DACA works basically under a prioritizing system, which means, it keeps only educated people in America in order to serve its economy and help the growth of its business through the taxes they pay, the low wages they get, and their contribution through scientific projects. So, Obama employed such evidences to convince those conservatives who, according to Dorsey and Barriga, agree to keep undocumented immigrants only to benefit from them (93).

Throughout his speech, Obama attempted to show the advantage of his immigration reform. Velasquez asserts that DACA recipients contributed with \$2 billion in the U.S economy revenue each year (7), and the dismiss of this bill would negatively affect the U.S chamber of commerce (9). Moreover, Obama made clear in his address that mass deportation would not be a solution. As could be perceived, mass deportation would be performed through traffic vessels which may shake the U.S. economy for the amount of money it would cost. Hence, Obama relies on strong arguments, that is to say the power of money and

language of competition, to come with an agreement with the Republicans to pass his immigration reform.

3.2. Obama Administration's Deportation of Unauthorized Immigrants

Obama announces in his speech:

When I took office, I committed to fixing this broken immigration system. And I began by doing what I could to secure our borders. Today, we have more agents and technology deployed to secure our southern border than at any time in our history. And over the past six years, illegal border crossings have been cut by more than half. Although this summer, there was a brief spike in unaccompanied children being apprehended at our border, the number of such children is now actually lower than it's been in nearly two years. Overall, the number of people trying to cross our border illegally is at its lowest level since the 1970s. Those are the facts.

Obama's discourse appeals also bragging about his achievements which compete other presidents' actions to fix the immigration system. It is worthy to note that Obama's rhetoric seems to ascertain that he took into consideration the Republican's position and his administration worked with DHS to set an immigration plan which supports deportation and basically border security.

Following this, Obama's immigration policy engineers with the same Republicans' strategy fostering security border, and cutting opportunities for some families who work hard. Moreover, he puts the immigration system in a crisis description to depict himself as a savior who advocates the national security in order to give his policy and authority credible impression. This seems as a reaction against the Republicans who underestimated his politics since he appeared in the political arena.

In the same line of argument, Obama's heroism is apparent when he pointed out: "over the past six years, deportations of criminals are up 80 percent. And that's why we're going to keep focusing on enforcement resources on actual threats to our security. Felons, not families. Criminals, not children. Gang members, not a mom who's working hard to provide for her kids." As previously mentioned, Obama administration worked with the DHS which set forth guidelines for his plans; therefore, deportations were part of their strategy. Skrenty and Lopez estimate that over 400,000 undocumented individual were annually deported by Obama. This rate was higher than Regan, Clinton, and bush records, and half of them had no criminal records (70), and Chishti et al. report that Obama spent \$ 18 billion on security border. The Human Rights Watch records that over 43% of the detained undocumented had no criminal background. Adding to that, the Human Rights Watch reports that Obama administration separated families and put undocumented children in detention centers.

When Truax interviews undocumented immigrants, she reports that Nancy, who graduated and worked in the economic administration, was detained after her hard work and success to pursue a perfect life. Nancy was held in the detention center oppressing her to sign documents that would legalize her deportation. She was deported to Mexico where she considers herself foreign from their culture and life. When Nancy took the first step to mail President Barack Obama, she reported that she received a long letter from him full of protocols to end up at the end miffed (02:19:35).

In fact, the Latinos were deeply affected and disappointed by Obama's deportation rate due to their high expectations and hope from his promise. Gonzales reports: "no one has expected a Democrat to deport more people than any other presidents in the U.S. history". As previously mentioned, the Republicans' control over the U.S. politics with their Master Narrative Ideology left Obama's authority under a strict boundary to precede with his first intention to provide citizenship. Indeed, he had to work with the Republicans to rush out

illegal immigration in the country. Kandel asserts that since the attacks of 9/11, security border and deportation are the centralized themes of Congress (7). Moreover, the Republicans put pressure on Obama (Gonzales). They had always been against tolerance toward 'illegal immigrants'. Therefore, DHS which was the creation of the conservatives took charge within Obama's immigration policy. According to Gonzales, members of DHS were the ones deporting the rate given by the provided studies, and decided to capture unauthorized people with no criminal records. For them, there would be "no priorities" again. Gonzales holds that the DHS deported that huge number and earned Obama a "Deporter in Chief" title.

Therefore, president Obama intended in his speech to justify to the Republicans his political position regarding undocumented people, and he envisioned to satisfy them that he could deport a huge number of "felons, criminals, and gangs". Obama's adoption of the Republicans strategy also aimed to win their trust to pass the upcoming bills. In the same logic, Volpp holds that "The pace of these deportations was apparently the product of a political calculus that in order to pass comprehensive immigration reform the Obama administration needed to demonstrate its commitment to heightened border enforcement" (393).

Thus, Obama's speech reveals about what is at stake in his immigration plan which evokes his restricted authority over the U.S. immigration policy. Above all, Obama faced a wide range of rejected attempts, and his persistence over immigration does not only aim the support of the Latinos, it could be translated as a reaction of a responsible and an American leader from the African-American descent against the Republicans who underestimated his politics.

4. The Importance of Immigration Policy for Obama

Reinforcing his immigration plan through his executive orders is important for Obama as a liberal Democrat president and for the Democratic campaign in the presidential elections.

4.2. Obama's Reputation as a Liberal African-American Leader

As previously mentioned, The Republicans tormented Obama's deal, and this stemmed from their conservative locus about dominance which restricted Obama's authority. Before becoming a president, Barack Obama exhaustively attacked the White politics in his autobiography *Dreams from My Father*. He vilified deliberately the conservative politics which discriminates other races and minorities. Moreover, he shows that their ideology as being the core culture in America creates gap of wealth in different ways. Accordingly, the conservative politics points out to the White nationalists who are mainly affiliated to the Republican Party.

Obama claims that he is vigilant that the stumbling block of the country lays in the White nationalism, hatred toward the other minorities, and "the question of competition, and issues of power" (198-202). While talking about Harold Washington, the first African-American mayor of Chicago, he contemplated the White system which may attempt to restrict Harold's ambitions to move forward because the conservative system imprisons any politician coming from the minority class. Obama calls it a "closed system with few moving parts" (231). Furthermore, his freshmen years instructed him a great deal about the manipulation of the White politics on the minorities who strive to climb up the mountain to reach a certain political power. Obama indicates that every time a "black" wins a political authority, the masters will change the rules (146).

In the same reasoning, Sonenshein asserts that when Obama won elections as the first African-American president of America, the Republicans had a political expectation about a

declined future for the American politics (16). On the other hand, Obama's victory against the Republican John McCain meant success for minorities' identity politics. The journalist Jorge Ramos states that the victory of Obama as a son of immigrant and African-American let the Latinos to aim high and hope to become presidents too. However, the failure of McCain and Bush administration made the Republicans to step as an impediment against Obama's policy in a politics which embodies his beliefs and Ideology in order to save their reputation, and prevent a minor leader's politics to take over the previous one. So, Obama's executive actions challenged the Republicans' expectations and their authority to change the U.S. immigration law. Indeed, he aimed to triumph for his racial politics and prove that he is apt for political responsibilities respecting the constitution as previous White presidents did.

Another argument which could explain the importance of Obama's executive actions is the fact that, on November 5, 2014, the Republicans won the midterm elections, and they would control Congress which would even limit his authority to pass his bill. Hence, Obama rushed to announce his executive actions using his authority as a president to pass his bill.

Within the same argument, Eichenberg claims that Iraq and Afghanistan affairs were among the first issues Obama tackled; he retrieved the U.S military from Iraq but he doubled his troops in Afghanistan in addition to his intervention in the Libyan civil conflict. Besides, he received enthusiastic support by the Republicans (17-18) which marked his success in troops' affairs (Eichenberg23). Obama's success in the gun affairs which are part of the Republicans' responsibilities did not benefit his reputation as a Democrat who was supposed to focus on liberal peaceful policies despite the fact that he could give a new breath to the U.S. economy.

Therefore, Obama's maintaining DACA and his executive actions were important for him to save his reputation from the public critics, especially when the matter is immigration

because this policy incarnates his ideas and beliefs as shown from his autobiography. Moreover, it was important for him to be recorded by history as the first African-American leader who challenged one of the most prominent and complex policies in the American constitution. Thus, this could explain the importance of his executive actions for the last years of his presidency.

3.2. Undocumented Immigrants' Impact on the Democrats' Campaign Elections

As he showed in *Dreams from My Father*, Obama had an enormous impact and impression by the first African-American mayor of Chicago, Harold Washington. While he realized that he “ had no idea” how to transform what he listens from people “into action” (Obama 159), Obama learned from Washington the strategy of campaigning.

Obama’s friend Marty encouraged him to seek for Washington’s support to build his “political campaign” (Obama 142). In fact, he was eager to work with Washington, and he compared himself with him for both are liberals and concerned about the minorities. Therefore, Washington answered Obama’s request and offered him a job to market for his campaign. Obama received from Washington “ten thousand dollars” with “two-thousand dollars” to cover his trip and rent (142). Hence, Obama started to trace his path toward politics.

At a time where Republicans stripped down the candidacy of Harold Washington, Obama stated that “Harold knows what he’s doing” (Obama 147). In fact, Harold’s power depended on the Chicago’s mass, “ the black community, the Hispanics, and the white liberals” (Obama 142) in order to win his elections.

In a relation to DACA, history repeats itself with Obama. When he promoted for his campaign, Obama followed the same paths of Harold Washington. He learned from Harold

how to mobilize the minorities and create political actions in order to win referendums for his elections and the victory of his campaign in the future.

When Obama came to the office, he aimed at the Dreamer community and promised them to commit himself to fix their status. He knew exactly the paths he took, he was a visionary planner who began to structure for his political aims since he joined Washington campaign to found his own one. Obama realized the power of the Dreamers and their subject matter to win their voice during his 2008, 2013 and the midterm elections, and mainly for the coming elections of his campaign. Skrenty and Lopez underline that for Obama, Latinos were the only strategy to win high referendums (63). Sonenshein states: “If immigrants could be kept away from the Democrats, and if they did not join in a minority coalition with African-Americans, a new coalition of Whites and immigrants could isolate the Democrats as the party of liberal intellectuals and African Americans.” (16).

Therefore, in 2016, Obama joined the nomination of Hilary Clinton to bolster up her candidacy. While talking about his immigration plan, he stated “she is the candidate”; which means, she would follow the same paths and offer opportunities for undocumented immigrants while taking charge of border security. Thus, the Latinos expected her to perpetuate Obama’s immigration legacy.

Federation of the American Immigration Reform posts that in 2014, a group of professors from university of Old Dominion with the support of George Mason university came up with 6.4% of undocumented people who voted for Obama, and 80% voted for the Democrats. According to Scarborough over 5.7 million voted for Obama and nearly the same ballots voted for Hilary Clinton in 2016.

Therefore, reinforcing the idea of granting citizenship to Latinos was important for Obama due to the impact of the Dreamer community in his campaign's elections, and the change they could bring through the elections' rate for the Democrat candidates.

Conclusion

This chapter gives insight into the reasons of Obama's failure to realize his immigration reform. It shows why Obama received a backlash from the Republicans whose beliefs derive from Takaki's Master Narrative perspective, and this restricted his authority because they believe that they should conserve their Anglo-Protestant culture and their market. Moreover, they considered Obama's immigration bill unlawful and expensive on Congress' budget. Thus, Obama faced them using arguments in order to settle a final deal passing his bill into a law. Finally, this chapter sheds light on the importance of his executive announcement for him as a liberal Democrat President coming from the minorities and for his Democrat campaign's elections.

General Conclusion

The present research elaborated former President Barack Obama's personal and political reasons behind his immigration reform through the study of his autobiography *Dreams from My Father* and his *Immigration Reform: Executive Announcement 2014* speech which led him to challenge the Republican Party to pass his immigration reform and grant undocumented immigrants citizenship. It has also elucidated the Republicans' conservative ideology which prevented Obama's bill.

In order to achieve our objective, we introduced, in the first chapter, a theoretical background about undocumented immigrants, identity politics and the American dream. This puts the study in the historical context of the undocumented immigrants giving insights about the important Reformation Acts which attempted to mend the broken immigration system in the United States. After that, this chapter explained the concept of identity politics and the American dream.

The second chapter provided an analysis of *Dreams from My Father* using identity politics to understand Obama's personal reasons to support the Dreamers community. The analysis has demonstrated that Obama is a symbol of the American dream who embraced its tenets. Besides, the analogous study of Obama's autobiography and the Dreamers' stories led to deduce a parallel conception of the American identity by Barack Obama and Dreamers.

The third chapter analyzed Obama's *Immigration Reform: Executive Announcement 2014* in order to explain why Obama was obliged to use his power as a president to pass DACA, and why he could not pass his bill into a law. It has also shown why Obama remained tenacious to pass his reform due to its importance for him as a man who respects his vows and as a liberal Democrat president.

The study of *Dreams from My Father* answers the question of why Obama takes the issue of undocumented immigrants into his consideration. Flipping around his life, Obama grows as a son of immigrant, and he has already been an immigrant in Indonesia. He believes that immigration has shaped the American character and forges its tenets to succeed. For him, America is a land of opportunities and everyone has right to pursue his dreams like his story and the one of his grandparents.

It is worth to note that Obama lives in a multicultural state, Hawaii, where he becomes liberal and open to other races and minorities. Hovering around his liberalism, Obama's liberal thoughts and beliefs in the minorities run from the stories which occur in his life. As already mentioned, he is a victim of racism for his skin color. Additionally, while he grows searching for his identity, he feels the necessity to join a community which fits his attitudes. Therefore, Chicago has been an opportunity for him to shorten the distance between a leader and his fellows. Obama mingles with the black community and other minorities understanding their pain. Thus, as an activist, he tries to contribute and fix their socio-political troubles.

Similarly, despite the fact that the Dreamers are discriminated by "the kings of mountain" for their illegal status, they strive to make a difference in their community and contribute to their society. Drifting around this, both Obama and the Dreamers have a parallel view of living in America and being part of it, and they use identity politics to prove their existence and ask for recognition. This leads Obama to maintain in his immigration plan, and to be convinced that undocumented immigrants deserve the American citizenship.

While Obama scored many attempts which have gone in a vacuum, he decided to face Congress. He used his power, as his predecessor presidents did, in order to pass his bill. Studying the Republicans' rejection of the bill from Takaki's Master Narrative point of view,

we deduce that Obama faces a dominant politics which attempts to conserve the Anglo-protestant culture and the constitution from the foreigner. This is what restricted the authority of Obama to grant citizenship to undocumented immigrants as it was expected. Yet, Obama challenged them using their language of competition, money, religion, and deportation, to convince them about the credibility of his plan. For him, his executive actions conveys also his authority and capacities as President coming from the minorities to bring forth one of the most complex policies in the U.S. politics, illegal immigration. This also means a triumph for his liberal beliefs in immigration and minorities and for the accomplishment of his vow to the Dreamers who voted for his campaign.

To conclude, the reasons which induced Obama to persist in his immigration reforms could be related to his life experiences, his political ideology, and interests. On one hand, they could stem from his liberal thoughts which he acquired throughout his life, particularly his shared experiences with the Dreamers; both went through exclusion and contributed to their community to prove their American identity realizing their American dream. On the other hand, they could be political because the undocumented immigrants are a way to guarantee the elections of his campaign, and to preserve his beliefs and reputation ending his two terms as a successful Liberal Democrat President coming from the minority.

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Resumé

Ce travail de recherche tente d'expliquer les raisons de la réforme de l'immigration d'Obama en faveur des immigrants sans papiers à travers l'étude de son autobiographie *Dreams from My Father* (1995) et son discours *Immigration Reform : Executive Announcement 2014*. Cette recherche passe en revue l'histoire des immigrants sans papiers en Amérique, les concepts à travers lesquels elle explique les origines de DACA, et le rejet de Congrès pour cette réforme. Pour cela, l'étude s'appuie sur la politique d'identité pour dévoiler les expériences personnelles d'Obama qui semblent similaires à celles de la communauté *Dreamers*. En fait, la politique d'identité réduit la distance entre les deux narratifs et forge le libéralisme d'Obama vers les *Dreamers*. En outre, l'analyse de son discours montre la confrontation d'Obama avec les Républicains qui ont rejeté son plan d'immigration et ont conduit à l'échec de ses tentatives de modifier le système d'immigration défectueux aux États-Unis. Il met également en lumière les arguments qu'Obama a utilisés pour convaincre ses rivaux de la valeur de sa réforme de l'immigration pour lui en tant que président Démocrate Libéral.

Concepts : Barack Obama, Les Réforms D'immigration. Les Immigrés Sans Papiers.

L'identité Politique. Les Républicains.