

Not Legal. Not Illegal. Just TPS.
Examining the Integration Experience of Central American Immigrants
Living under a Regime of Long-Term Temporality.

By

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ABSTRACT

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This study analyzes the integration experience of Central American immigrants (Salvadorans, Hondurans and Nicaraguans) under Temporary Protected Status (TPS). Created in 1990 by the US Congress to clarify the procedural process to aid citizens of countries suffering human and natural strife, TPS first designation was intended to correct the discriminatory application of the 1980's refugee act to people fleeing political violence from El Salvador. Denial of asylum rights however, was most severely applied to Hondurans and Guatemalans who despite being equally situated, were excluded from original designation. TPS eventually completely transformed itself into a humanitarian relief program and the original intent of remedying the discriminatory treatment of Salvadorans was eventually forgotten. It is the main premise of this research study that the initial discriminatory application of the Refugee Act of 1980 to Central American (CAs)

nationals created a hostile regulatory legal framework that trapped this community into a context of long-term discrimination as members of American society. The denial of access to citizenship rights to CAs meant the denial of rights to equal access of opportunity which truncated their ability to build traditional political opportunity structures (i.e. voting) to enable them to advocate for rights for their future co-nationals. Set within the complexities of the current immigration debate, this study applies current political science theory to analyze the experiences of this specific class of CAs. Utilizing social movement theory, this study tracks the group's political activism and proposes a new model of integration defined as Bounded Integration (BI). BI captures their integration experience within time limits that confine and restrain their daily lives. Using ethnographic analysis of 29 participant interviews, the study focuses on the evaluation of the group's subjective integration, seeking to understand if this population has adopted a positive or negative view of their own integration. Findings demonstrate that this group holds a positive sense of their own integration and after many years in legal limbo, they have developed a sense of belonging to American culture. Despite the lack of access to citizenship rights, members of the group feel they have become American.

Dedication

For my children, Diego and Enrique, whose free spirit, kindness and love,
inspires me daily to fight for a just society worthy of their future.

Este logro es para toda mi familia, los Campos y los Medina.

Somos inmigrantes y somos Americanos.

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INTRODUCTION

“TPS labels you as having a limit...”¹

**

For the last two decades, the debate on immigration policy reform in the US political system has focused mostly on the plight of the undocumented, or the more than 10.7 million illegal immigrants in the United States.² The political and policy impasse of how to address the social and economic impact of this group obscures the complexity of addressing the problems of the overall US system of immigration which covers the experiences of arrivals to the US in a myriad of categories; refugees, asylum seekers, immigrants and non-immigrants, alike. In between those who arrive legally and those who enter illegally, there are vast numbers of migrants who fall within different categories and under different and complex programs that limit the ability of some to gain permanent status and eventual access to citizenship rights.

Such complexity can best be exemplified by the experiences of a certain group of Central American immigrants (Salvadorans, Hondurans and Nicaraguans) who, for the last two decades, have lived in the United States under a type of “permanent temporality”³ by virtue of being members of a class of refugees granted a

¹ Study Participant #004DC

² *US Immigrant Population dips to lowest level in a decade*. Pew Research Center, Nov 27th, 2018. <http://www.pewhispanic.org/2018/11/27/u-s-unauthorized-immigrant-total-dips-to-lowest-level-in-a-decade/>

³ Messick, Madeline & Claire Bergen. *“Temporary Protected Status in the United States: A Grant of Humanitarian Relief that is less than permanent.”* Migration Policy Institute, July 2nd, 2014.

work-permit in 1999 and 2000 under a special program called Temporary Protected Status (TPS). TPS was first created in 1990 by the US Congress to clarify the procedural process to aid citizens of countries suffering human and natural strife. Specifically, however, TPS first designation by Congress was intended to correct the discriminatory application of the 1980's refugee act to people fleeing political violence from El Salvador's 12-years of civil war.⁴ With the passage of time however, the TPS program completely transformed itself into a humanitarian relief program and the original intent of remedying the discriminatory treatment of Salvadorans was eventually forgotten. Consequently, the TPS program served as a stop-gap measure by the US Congress to simultaneously acknowledge and permanently deny this initial group of Central Americans' rightful claim to political asylum. Salvadorans today continue to be the largest population protected under the current TPS program.⁵

The denial of asylum rights in the 1980s was most severely applied to Hondurans and Guatemalans who, unlike Salvadorans, were never acknowledged as legitimate asylum seekers and were excluded from the original TPS designation.⁶ It is the main premise of this research study that the initial discriminatory application

⁴ Under the 1980 Refugee Act, the US denied 98% of asylum request from Salvadoran, Guatemalan and Hondurans who arrived at the US border requesting asylum in the 1980s. The history of TPS will be discussed at length in Chapter One.

⁵ The original beneficiaries of TPS spent decades navigating a legal framework that granted permanent residency to some but not all of the original TPS recipients. Some of the original TPS holders were never granted citizenship under the many programs that were enacted after the ABC Class Settlement; those programs included deferred enforcement (DED), the ABC Cases, and NACARA. More in depth discussion of these programs will be included in Chapter One.

⁶ Nicaraguans were also denied asylum in the 1980s but at a lower rate than Salvadorans, Guatemalans and Hondurans. Their immigration status was eventually resolved with the passage of NACARA (The Central American Refugee Act of 1997) which granted a path to citizenship to Nicaraguans and Cubans, but only allowed Salvadorans and Guatemalans to re-apply for a review of their asylum application claims that had been denied in the 1980s. More on the NACARA legislation will be examined in Chapter One.

of the Refugee Act of 1980⁷ to these Central Americans nationals created a hostile regulatory legal framework that has marked this community since its arrival into a context of long-term discriminatory treatment under US immigration law. This initial discrimination failed to legalize over one million Central American political refugees and truncated from the start the ability of this group to build economic and social capital to facilitate their full socio-economic integration into American society. Furthermore, the lack of access to citizenship rights mean that this community lacks the ability to organize traditional political opportunity structures (i.e. voting and electing their own people to public office, etc.) to enable them to advocate for rights for their co-nationals who continued to migrate to the US years after the wars in the region ended.

Illegal immigration from Central America is at its peak today and the current crisis at the border (i.e. arrival of unaccompanied children, the immigrant caravan, the indefinite detention of children and the separation of families, etc.) drives the anti-immigrant sentiment in Congress and the rhetoric of President Trump.⁸ As Caddy-Hallet explains, the erasure of the history of discrimination against Central Americans political refugees in the 1980s has absolved the US polity, specifically the US Congress, from any responsibility to fix the long term impact of lack of rights for an entire population who was systematically discriminated against by

⁷ Messick, Madeline & Claire Bergen. *"Temporary Protected Status in the United States: A Grant of Humanitarian Relief that is less than permanent."* Migration Policy Institute, July 2nd, 2014

⁸ https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/national-security/faced-with-migration-crisis-us-border-chief-finds-no-easy-fix-in-central-america/2018/09/30/b3cad7d4-c327-11e8-b338-a3289f6cb742_story.html?utm_term=.c21272ccdafb

the US Government in its application of immigration law. This study argues that the original denial of asylum rights to an entire class of political refugees in the 1980s set the stage for Central Americans to continue to live today within a legal framework of circumscribed rights, societal discrimination and exclusion that is impacting this population's current integration options and the socio-economic mobility and assimilation outcomes of their descendants.⁹

Despite the history of discrimination outlined above, the dominant narrative for a solution to the plight of the current TPS holders focuses however, on the impact of cancellation to those granted TPS in the year 1999 and in 2000. After natural disasters devastated the Central American region, the Government of President Bill Clinton activated the humanitarian provisions of the 1990 TPS legislation granting protection from deportation to more than 300,000 Central Americans who were already living illegally in the US.¹⁰ Hence, in the eyes of the American dominant political class, TPS holders belong to a class of immigrants that are granted temporary humanitarian protection that is never meant to transform itself into a permanent right to settle. This narrative of the TPS as solely a humanitarian relief program, excludes the historical discriminatory nature of the program which has been used to permanently deny rights to its largest group of

⁹ Cady-Hallet (2014)

¹⁰ The transformation of TPS into a humanitarian program is discussed at length in Chapter One. Also, as this study will show, many Salvadorans under TPS today were left-overs from the 1990 program, and after spending years in illegality, re-applied for the program when it became available again in 2000. The actual number of left-overs is unknown, but it is estimated to be significant. In this study, 10% of the participants were left-overs from the 1990 program and tended to be older and or retirement age.

beneficiaries, Central Americans immigrants. President Trump's recent announcement that his administration intends to cancel TPS benefits for all current beneficiaries¹¹ reinforces the dominant narrative that the program is being abused by those under its protection because they see it as an anchor to demand rights to permanently settle in the US.¹² His intention to end TPS benefits is part of his agenda to limit undocumented migration and to drive the anti-immigrant sentiment that so far has prevented the US Congress to enact any meaningful immigrant reform in the last few decades.

While the US political system continues to debate immigration reform, advocates for the rights of TPS holders, under the banner of the National TPS Alliance,¹³ are currently engaged in a campaign to raise the American public awareness of the plight of all current 300,000 TPS holders whose benefits have been terminated by the Trump Administration. According to recent studies, current TPS holders are also the parents of more than 273,000 American children¹⁴ whose lives would be upended if their parents are deported. Learning from the social movement mobilization experience of the past and adapting tactics from the DREAMER's struggles to obtain protections under DACA,¹⁵ TPS holders are

¹¹ <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/05/04/us/honduras-temporary-protected-status.html>

¹² <https://www.vox.com/policy-and-politics/2017/12/29/16504272/chain-migration-family-how-trump-end>

¹³ National TPS Alliance is a coalition of local TPS Committees organized by Central American service organizations, advocates, unions and allies. The complete list of members can be found here: <https://www.nationaltpsalliance.org/committees/>

¹⁴ https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/global-opinions/wp/2018/07/06/trump-is-set-to-separate-more-than-200000-u-s-born-children-from-their-parents/?noredirect=on&utm_term=.37a8fedf55dd

¹⁵ A comparison between TPS and DACA holders' social movement struggles to claim a sense of "belonging" will be examine in Chapter Two. The concept of social movement mobilization in the Central American community's fight for citizenship rights will be fully analyzed in Chapter Four.

organizing locally to mobilize national support for an extension of TPS while simultaneously lobbying Congress for a permanent legislative solution that grants them a right to permanence. At the time of writing, the House of Representatives approved a bill authored by Congresswoman Lucille Roybal-Allard (D-CA), The Dream & Promise Act, that aims to grant TPS holders and DACA holders a path to citizenship.¹⁶ However, its path for approval in the US Senate is unknown and uncertain. President Trump has already threatened his intent to veto any legislation that expands legalization as opposition to immigration from Central America has become part of his re-election message heading into the US presidential elections in the year 2020.¹⁷

As an additional strategy to force Congress to acknowledge that the historical permanence of this community should constitute access to citizenship rights, different impacted nationalities of TPS holders have come together to file several class-action law suits against the Trump Administration for his administration's denial of their TPS extension. The lawsuits allege ethnic discrimination in the new evaluation process on home country conditions that the State Department uses to declare a country safe for return. One of the lawsuits also alleges that by threatening deportation, the US Government is violating the constitutional rights of their American born children who deserve the right to grow up in their country

¹⁶ <https://www.vox.com/2019/3/12/18261574/dream-act-daca-tps-democrats-bill>

¹⁷ According to recent polling 68% of all Americans living in key battleground districts support legalization and a path to citizenship for Dreamers. While a supermajority of Americans said they oppose efforts to end TPS protections for immigrants whose home countries have been made unsafe by natural disaster or war. For up to date polling on current immigration reform proposal visit <https://americasvoice.org/blog/dream-tps-introduction/>

with their parents.¹⁸ Lower jurisdictional courts have already granted preliminary injunctions in two of the lawsuits and, as a result, TPS holders from Sudan, Nicaragua, Haiti and El Salvador will receive automatic nine-month extensions of their TPS and work authorization while the lawsuits continue to move through the lower courts. A similar suit has been filed on behalf of Honduran and Nepali TPS holders, and while the suit moves through the judicial process, all nationalities will receive a similar extension until their cases are adjudicated.¹⁹ The most likely outcome of this legal maneuvering is that the class action lawsuits will move up to higher courts and eventually end up in front of the US Supreme Court, where the outcome of determination of ethnic-discrimination is also unknown. As in the past, while the courts move their judicial process along, TPS holders continue to live their daily lives in legal limbo and in a state of constant anxiety about their future.

Given that the original legislation that created TPS in 1990 specifically states that a TPS status cannot be changed to access a path to permanent residency, the only solution is for Congress to enact new legislation that allows TPS status and their history of compliance and good behavior to be transformed into a path to citizenship. The conundrum for TPS holders is that due to the fact that the majority of Central Americans have spent decades under a legal framework of discrimination and without access to citizenship rights, the community itself does not have

¹⁸ For more information on the current status of TPS Class Action lawsuits visit <https://www.nationaltpsalliance.org/tps-law-suit/>

¹⁹ https://www.washingtonpost.com/national/honduran-nepali-immigrants-sue-to-block-trump-administration-keep-temporary-protected-status/2019/02/11/b79299e6-2da9-11e9-8ad3-9a5b113ecd3c_story.html?utm_term=.e8cebe38be36

enough political influence to turn their numbers (now at more than three million) into a political liability for politicians in either political party. Unlike the Cuban American integration and political ascendancy, the “right to stay” demand of the Central American TPS population is one based on external conditions of their home countries (i.e. violence, poverty etc.), rather than on a narrative of belonging that elevates their 20+ years of existence in the US as one of deserving rights to become American citizens. Today, Central Americans are the second largest group of Latinos in the United States after Mexicans, higher in numbers than Cuban-Americans, but with the lowest number of naturalized citizens of any other Latino group except Mexicans. Forty nine percent (49%) of the Central American population residing in the US today still lacks legal immigration status.

Under this context, this study expands on current research that describes TPS as a program that creates a sense of inclusion when it grants legal personhood to beneficiaries while simultaneously creating a system of exclusion by limiting access to citizenship rights. Menjivar (2006) describes the TPS experience as part of a stratified system of belonging that, from the start, sets the stage for unequal legal treatment and discrimination of an entire class of people. Multiple categories in immigration law generate fragmented forms of belonging that shape the assimilation process of immigrant groups in different categories of legality.²⁰ In

²⁰ Menjivar, Cecilia. “*Liminal Legality: Salvadoran and Guatemalan Immigrants’ Lives in the United States.*” AJS Volume 111 Number 4 (January 2006) University of Chicago. Pg. 1006

the case of Salvadorans, Guatemalans, Hondurans and a handful of Nicaraguans, their limited status has impacted their social networks and their family structures. They live their lives on a state of permanent emotional trauma as they lack family reunification rights and are not able to freely travel back and forth to the country of origin to visit relatives. In addition to limited physical mobility, TPS holders' economic future is constrained by their lack of permanency that does not allow for investment in their own future. The economic limitations of transnational lives has forced them to mutually support their relatives back home via remittances while supporting their US families. While TPS holders have exercised agency in the demand of some protections, the historical discrimination and denial of permanent rights to the Central American population since its arrival reveals a systematic pattern of discrimination against this group of immigrants that currently impacts their ability to demand permanency and citizenship rights.

Today, Central American TPS holders are once again engaged in a long struggle to convince the American political system that after decades of positively contributing to the American economy as workers, they are deserving of citizenship rights and have earned the right to belong in US society permanently. But unlike the DREAMER's social movement trajectory of proving their American-ness,²¹ the "Save TPS"²² movement has yet to successfully transform the demand for a

²¹ The DREAMER's narrative of belonging is explored at length in Chapter Two.

²² "Save TPS" is the name of the campaign by the National TPS Alliance to protect TPS holders from immediate deportation after the initial termination of the program by the Trump Administration beginning in 2017.

“right to stay” into a clear narrative for the “right to belong” to society as Americans. The personal experience of this group of immigrants, and the ways in which they define their own narrative of belonging to US society, is the focus of analysis of this research study.

Problem Statement

Current TPS holders fall under a regime of temporality; they have the right to work legally, but they lack access to citizenship rights, rights to petition for family reunification and rights to travel freely to visit their relatives left behind. While the population of Central American migrants in permanent temporality is small compared to the size of the overall undocumented population, studying this specific group will shed light into the experiences of a significant group of migrants who have the right to work, but no path to citizenship. Set within the complexities of the current immigration debate, this study will analyze the integration experiences of this specific class of Central American immigrants who have experienced discrimination and long-term permanent temporality. This study will examine the impact that this status has in the integration options of this group of immigrants and how this lack of rights has limited the ability of the group to develop socio-economic and political capital to assist in their children’s ability to achieve parity of opportunities with their fellow American citizens. It has also impacted the ability to define their right to belong as full members of American society.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to understand the dynamics that influence the integration experience of the TPS population into American society and to explore the impact that their in-between status has had on their own sense of belonging. The specific new area of knowledge to be explored by this study is this group's own sense of belonging to American society after more than 20 years of permanent temporality and lack of access to citizenship rights.

Bounded Integration, a new conceptual model for TPS integration

In order to capture the different dynamics of this population's process of integration, Chapter Three in this study proposes a new model of integration called the "TPS Bounded Integration Model." The concept of bounded integration attempts to address the particular experience of TPS holders' access to rights within a bounded timeline—every eighteen months, that contract or expand depending on the political whims of the polity of the time. This theoretical framework is a modification of several conceptual models of immigrant political integration that take into consideration the context of arrival and societal reception (Portes & Rumbaut 1990), non-traditional forms of immigration political participation through social movement under a framework of inclusion and exclusion (Cook 2013), the responsiveness of the traditional political system to the social movement agency of the immigrant group (Hochschild 2009), and the impact of subjective integration

as a critical indicator of integration and eventual assimilation outcomes (Chebel d'Appollonia 2015).

Characteristic of the Central American population under TPS

In order to understand the current circumstances of this population, we must examine the historical context of their arrival. As stated earlier, the discriminatory legal treatment of this group of political refugees when they first arrived in the USA limited their opportunities for integration; they lacked any resettlement assistance and access to the traditional incorporation regimes offered to other similar situated political refugees of the time. This research proposal seeks to understand the impact that the original discrimination and context of arrival had in the integration choices available to this group of immigrants and how those choices have set them on a path to what this study's author calls bounded integration.

As explained in Chapter Three, bounded integration is a state of legality with time limits that confine and restrain the ability of TPS holders to make long-term investment in their own economic and social welfare, and on the future socio-economic development of their children. It also keeps this population in a state of emotional trauma that impacts their sense of belonging to the communities where

they reside. This sense of belonging or non-belonging for themselves and their children impacts their integration choices and has the potential to lead to a sense of involuntary non-integration (Chebel D'Appollonia 2015) or segmented assimilation (Portes & Zhou 1993) for themselves and future generation of their US-born children who are American citizens.

The experience of Central Americans in the US has been the subject of limited academic study and has focused mainly on their historical context of arrival and, to a limited extent, on their economic and social participation in the local communities where they settled (Menjivar 2000 & 2006). While some studies include analysis of the legal-rights framework plus their ongoing fight for permanence (Coutin 2004, Abrego & Lackhani 2015), others studies focus mainly on their social movement activism in labor struggles such as the Justice for Janitors²³ campaign and the national organizing of day-laborers rights across the US by NDLO in the 1990s.²⁴ Nevertheless, long-term evaluation of their integration experience in the US polity is lacking, and it is a worthy area of further study. In an attempt to address the limited study of this population, this research study uses an ethnographic research methodology approach, plus empirical analysis of current social-science literature on US immigrant integration, to explore the

²³ Oglesby, Elizabeth. Jan 18th, 2019. <http://theconversation.com/how-central-american-migrants-helped-revive-the-us-labor-movement-109398>

²⁴ NDLO is the National Day Laborers Organizing Network. It was first organized in the early 1990s by Central American activists who saw a need to educate the mostly Central American migrant laborers on the streets of Los Angeles about their labor rights under US law. For more information visit <https://ndlon.org>. Today NDLO is one of the lead organizations in the SaveTPS Campaign and the effort to organize TPS holders into local committees that are connected to a national network of groups participating in the movement for immigration reform.

phenomena of integration as experienced by this group of Central American immigrants who have held TPS status for more than two decades.

Research Questions

Using the NVivo Software for qualitative analysis, this study analyses the experiences of TPS holders in two metropolitan regions, NY-NJ and the Washington DC, which are the two second largest population hubs for Central Americans. Applying ethnographic research methodology, this study examines the integration experience of Central American refugees by attempting to answer the following questions:

Question 1: What are the measurements of integration that more closely apply to this population in the evaluation of their integration experience?

Given the context of their arrival and their experience in long term temporality under a regime of lack of access to formal citizenship rights, it is important to evaluate if the traditional measures of integration for immigrants are the most appropriate to evaluate this population's integration experience. One of the main arguments for the support of TPS as a solution for the plight of Central Americans refugees is that it provides a higher level of security because this population is protected from the insecurity of deportation. Holding a work-permit then, should facilitate the movement of the TPS population into a better socio-economic status

that affords them an opportunity for social mobility. Immigrants with limited citizenship rights experience exclusion in different facets of their lives. In order to understand this population eventual assimilation outcome, it will be important to identify the specific areas in which this population experiences exclusion. It is also important to catalog the areas in which this population already feels integrated into their local communities.

Question 2: Who are the actors doing the job of integration of the TPS refugee population?

Central American refugees under TPS do not qualify for any formal government assistance programs for political refugees, nor any public social safety-net programs administered by any government entity of the US. Because the United States lacks a formal process of incorporation for non-political refugees, most immigrants in the US have historically depended on their co-nationals for assistance in navigating life upon arrival. As demonstrated in the current literature findings, like many other immigrants before them, Central Americans relied heavily on the economic resources of social enclaves created by earlier co-nationals who informally supported their initial resettlement. Since the moment of their arrival, the TPS population has relied on local social justice organizations and allies to advocate for their continued protection under the program and for their inclusion into the USA polity. Since the early 1980s, unconventional political participation through social movement mobilization pushed local elected officials and

traditional rights advocates into a national effort to support asylum rights' claims on behalf of the Central American refugee population. This type of broad social justice coalition continues today, as this population now seeks a permanent solution to their temporality. This research question seeks to explore the role their co-national leaders and groups play in aiding this community build and sustain their continued fight for the right to belong.

Question 3: Has the transnationalism of TPS holders slowed down or impeded their integration process and eventual assimilation outcomes?

Given the fact that TPS holders do not have a right to family reunification and are not allowed to travel freely to visit relatives, their existence in the United States has been marked by high levels of transnationalism and emotional trauma. Despite many years of forced family separation, this community has been able to maintain familial bonds via long distance communication and remittances to economically sustain the families left behind. Given their forced transnationalism, it is important to explore whether they have been able to develop economic roots in the United States that support their integration into American society. Another avenue of exploration is whether their long-term family separation led to the creation of permanent transnational communities that are resource-poor and not able to invest in their futures in the US. Following up on Ewa Morawska's work on transnationalism and integration, this research will seek to understand if their current level of transnational activism has served as a deterrent for their integration.

Question 4: *What is the subjective interpretation of their own integration?*

Objective interpretations of incorporation and assimilation focus on the measurable metrics of advancement via group and individual socio-economic status (SES). However, this research project seeks to shed light as to TPS holders' subjective evaluation of their own integration process. Given their long existence in limited legality, it seeks to understand the areas of their everyday experience when they feel a sense of belonging to American society. The study of their subjective integration seeks to evaluate whether this population has a positive or negative view of their own integration experience. It is also important to examine if any segments of this group have already engaged in what Chebel d'Appollonia identifies as "voluntary immigrant non-incorporation," leading to the formation of bonding ethnic communities that experience segmented assimilation. Hence, this research proposal will seek to evaluate TPS holders' perception of their own integration and whether, despite their lack of access to citizenship rights, they still perceive themselves as belonging to American society and maintain a positive view of their own integration.

Taken in their totality, the answers to these four questions will outline a clear assessment of the positive or negative impact of TPS status on the integration process of this small but significant group of immigrants. In attempting to understand their integration experiences in the four areas identified above, this research proposal yields important data on integration outcomes that could be used to examine the potential impact of any future policy proposals on temporary immigrant arrangements in the USA. The US polity is still debating how to regulate the undocumented population and what type of rights, if any, to grant them. Any future debate on temporary work permit arrangements for the undocumented or for any future workers from the region would benefit from an in-depth analysis of the societal consequences of granting people limited rights to work and live, but not rights to fully engage in society as citizens.

Framework of the Study

This research project seeks to understand the dynamics that influence the integration process of immigrants under TPS status and to explore the impact that their in-between legality has had on their sense of belonging after almost 20+ years in legal limbo. In order to assess this group's sense of belonging, this study includes empirical analysis of key objective areas of traditional integration measures, plus a subjective area of their personal experience. The objective areas are outlined on the TPS Bounded Integration model outlined on

Chapter Three and cover the following areas: (1) the historical context of their arrival, the (2) the regulatory legal framework that defines their everyday societal exclusion/or inclusion, (3) their group agency to demand rights via social movement mobilization, (4) and their forced transnationalism and emotional trauma resulting from a lack of family reunification rights. The new dimension of study is the subjective dimension and it covers (5) their own subjective interpretation of their identity as “belonging or non-belonging” to American society.²⁵

Applying an ethnographic research framework, the study analyses twenty-nine (29) recorded field interviews that evaluate TPS holders’ sense of their own integration experience. This research also includes the empirical analysis of traditional political science theory and how it applies to a group of immigrants who lack citizenship rights. Traditional Political Science studies of US immigrant assimilation describes group integration as process by which a given group gains economic and political power via formal voting rights and their ability to run members of their community for political office. Under this traditional framework of integration, only formal political participation (i.e. through voting, levels of English acquisition, and acculturation, etc.) are defined as characteristics that demonstrate positive signs of integration that lead to an eventual positive group assimilation outcomes (Portes 1996). However, this traditional path of evaluating assimilation outcomes requires access to citizenship rights, which have been historically denied to most Central Americans since their arrival in the US in 1980s.

²⁵ The TPS Bounded Integration Model is fully explain in Chapter Three.

Therefore, in order to add new knowledge to the scientific study of integration for those immigrants without access to citizenship rights, this study focuses on a second dimension of assimilation: subjective integration (Chebel d'Appollonia 2015). This second dimension evaluates the individual perception of their own experiences and whether, regardless of their lack of access to citizenship rights, this group of immigrants still holds onto a positive view of their own experience living in the United States.

Key Findings of the Study

This study presents findings from an ethnographic study of twenty-nine participants who currently hold TPS status in the NY-NJ and WDC region. The results of the study indicate that these population of TPS holders has a positive sense of their own achievements and have a sense belonging to their local communities. Overall, this community feels that the US is their home country and they feel a positive sense of belonging to American society.

1. Findings on Traditional Measurements of Integration

The first research question sought to determine aspects of the participants integration experience that stand out as specific to those immigrants with TPS. One of the known positive outcomes of TPS status is that access to a work permit gives these immigrants a higher sense of security than the undocumented because it removes the insecurity of deportation from their daily lives.

It also gives these workers the ability to look for better work options improving in that manner their earnings and social mobility. The demographic data gathered in the study revealed that this population is indeed economically better-off than the undocumented population. However, despite having a work-permit, the group is not experiencing social mobility or parity-of-earnings in par with other legal immigrants (Waters & Jimenez 2005). The average annual earnings of TPS holders in this study was just above that of the undocumented at \$43K per year, compared to \$36K for the undocumented. The differential was even smaller when compared by locality; TPS holders in NJ were earning on average \$37K, which is just \$1K above the undocumented. In comparison, TPS holders in the DC area were earning an average of \$49K, with some business owners having higher income and tilting the average higher. Nevertheless, higher earnings were more prevalent for those TPS holders who were younger at time of arrival and attended formal schooling, craft and vocational training in the US. The difference in earning differentials among localities was not a focus area of this study, but a worthy area of further research.

These findings on traditional measurements of integration reveal that while TPS holders have a higher level of security in their everyday lives, their economic mobility is just above that of their undocumented counterparts as they are bounded in their ability to engage in wealth building endeavors that could

eventually improve the SES outcomes for their children and themselves in old age. Even those who have achieved success in business enterprises also experience blocked mobility. While current earnings, home ownership and entrepreneurship are good indicators of a favorable starting position vis a vis the undocumented, these findings reveal that the majority of participants still experience frustration with the limitations their status imposes in their ability to achieve long term economic goals for their families.

2. Findings of Actors Doing the Job of Integration

Since the moment of their arrival, the Central American population currently under TPS relied on local and religious community organizations created by compatriots and allies to advocate for their economic survival and their legal protection. The groups that were organized to defend the asylum claims of the first wave of refugees in the early 80s-90s, and with the exception of a few new ones, continue in the early 2000s and today to be the ones advocating for their permanent legalization. The findings in this study do show that the majority of TPS holders who participated reported high levels of engagement in the activities led by these local community organizations. As in the past, these local groups are affiliated to national networks like the National TPS Alliance, a brand-new coalition of local TPS Committees, that are directly engaged in the advocacy for TPS renewal and permanency for this group.

3. Findings on Levels of Transnationalism:

The majority of the participants in the study (85%) reported still having close family members back home and providing for them economically. Additionally, about 24% of them reported participating in hometown associations or supporting community-level programs through their church as a way to improve conditions in the communities they left behind. Nevertheless, despite this high level of connection to their family and community, very few of them were interested in the political dynamics or electoral politics of their home countries. Although 48% of them stated that they followed political news in their home countries via Spanish television, none of them expressed any interest in supporting political candidates that visit their area or are running for office in their home countries. In the case of Salvadorans who now have the right to vote abroad in their country national elections, zero percent of them (0%) expressed interest in voting in the Salvadoran elections for President.

At the same time, they did express high concern and knowledge of US-based electoral politics. The majority of them expressed interest in staying up-to-date in US politics, and they were aware that national elections have implications to them personally as they define who is elected and who can vote to approve policies that benefit the immigrant population. In short, the findings in this study reveal that this group of TPS holders was engaged in internationalism at the personal level but was not inclined to get involved in the political

affairs of their home countries. At the societal level, this group is more attuned to their US identity and to the US cultural and political norms.

4. Findings on Subjective Integration:

The findings in this research study reveal that the majority of the participants in the study report a positive sense of their own sense of belonging to American society. Eighty-seven percent (87%) described the US as their home, and despite reporting higher levels of personal and group discrimination both personally and as part of a group, they still expressed a positive sense of belonging and gratitude for being given the opportunity to achieve their own personal economic goals.

Nevertheless, a significant percentage of the study participants (34%) expressed distrust of the current US government, specifically of the US President. Critical for the integration of this community at the local level however, is their avoidance of any interactions with local law enforcement officials; sixty-seven (67%) of the study participants stated that they purposely avoid any interactions with police and were careful to stay out of trouble to avoid having to deal with local enforcement agents. A significant number of them, 13% stated they do not trust the police at all due to past negative interactions, but that if they were in trouble, they felt that they were better positioned to engage the police for help compared to their fellow undocumented neighbors.

Sixty-five (65%) percent of participants felt that their own experience of discrimination by the dominant society was similar to that experienced by other similarly situated groups (i.e. other immigrant, Latinos and other minority groups like African Americans). This feeling of commonality in discrimination reveals a sense of societal bonding because it acknowledges an understanding that discrimination - due to ethnic, racial, or immigration status - is indeed part of a larger American experience for all minority groups within a dominant society. It also demonstrates that this group has acquired a nuanced understanding of norm-making and societal transformation in the American political process.

Other General Findings

As the findings of the study reveal, this population holds a positive sense of their own integration and a heightened sense of belonging to American society. Additional key findings include:

- TPS holders' labor force participation stands at 95%, with the majority of TPS holders working more than one job. Similar to recent findings, the labor force participation of TPS holders in this study is higher than that of the general population (which stands at 62.9%).
- The level of entrepreneurship for TPS holders in this study stands at 24%, a significant higher number than the general TPS population in other

areas of the country. This number is also significant because this population often lack access to investment capital for entrepreneurial activities. Entrepreneurial activity has expanded in small to medium size businesses in the industries where the population is currently employed such as home-cleaning companies, landscaping, truck-driving operations and construction management enterprises.

- The majority of TPS holders in the study (90%) expressed unwillingness to return to their home countries as they had spent most of their adult working lives in the US. They stated that they will try their luck and go back to illegality rather than leave their children behind or go back to a country they no longer remember, recognize or belong.
- Sixty-five percent (65%) of the study participants have US born children, with 34% of them having kids who are either DACA beneficiaries or TPS holders themselves. Only 17% of them have children who are undocumented.
- Seventy-three (73%) percent of participants expressed a sense of feeling personally discriminated for reasons such as the lack of citizenship papers, misunderstandings from government officials who do not know anything about TPS and/or work-permits, and from employers who do not understand TPS extensions and regulations. Personal feelings of

discrimination were more prevalent in their interactions at the DMV (Department of Motor Vehicles) upon expiration of their driver's license. Other areas of personal discrimination were due to limited fluency in English, their skin-color, or specifically because they were Central Americans.

Structure of this Dissertation

This research study is organized in the following manner:

- ❖ Chapter One provides the historical context of arrival for the Central American population. It reviews the historical background of the Central American migration of the 1980s set within the foreign policy circumstance of the time and explores the historical context for the deferential treatment granted to political refugees from the same Central American region.
- ❖ Chapter Two reviews the individual and group dynamics of the Central American population-at-large, and of TPS, specifically. It compares this group's trajectory of rights demands to that of DACA holders and DREAMERs.
- ❖ Chapter Three outlines the research methodology and framework used to analyze the data obtained during field research that include 29 recorded interviews of TPS participants in the WDC and NY/NJ region.

- ❖ Chapter Four explores existing academic research on integration/assimilation and the implications of recent findings in the interpretation of this group's experiences in advancing the concept of citizenship rights in the USA.
- ❖ Chapter Five outlines the data analysis and results based on the analysis of the data via NVivo software.
- ❖ Chapter Six includes the findings, conclusions, and recommendations of the study.

CHAPTER ONE: THE CONTEXT OF ARRIVAL

Earlier generations of European immigrants who came to the US enjoyed relatively easy access to citizenship rights plus jus-soli for their descendants. Recent waves of non-European immigrants, however, have faced more regulations at the point-of-entry limiting, for some, their access to citizenship rights. Therefore, any study that attempts to evaluate the assimilation outcomes of non-European immigrants today must also explore the implications that different type of legal rights granted to immigrants upon arrival in the host society have on their ability to fully integrate into their new community. As Portes and Rambaut (1990) explain, the assimilation outcomes of any immigrant group is dependent upon the context of reception that the group finds upon arrival, which can include several factors but key among them are the political relations between sending and receiving countries, the state of the host economy in the communities they settle, and the level of co-ethnic social economic capital that facilitates an informal support system for integration.

Examining the integration experience of TPS holders requires an analysis of the context of arrival for Central American immigrants into the US host society. The regulatory legal framework that marked their arrival is important in understanding their path towards integration and the eventual path of assimilation that their descendants are already undertaking. Unlike other similarly-situated immigrants of the time (i.e. Cubans), Central American migration in the 1980s was marked within a framework of legal insecurity, illegality, and eventually permanent

temporality. In order to examine the long-term consequences of lack of access to citizenship rights, this chapter will examine the context of arrival for Central American refugees and its impact on the group's ability to gain economic mobility and formal political influence and social group integration in US society.

Background: US Foreign Policy Impact on Central American Immigration

Central American migration began in earnest at the beginning of the 1980s during the height of US anti-communist foreign policy engagement in the Latin American region. Driven by economic inequalities, civil wars exploded in the early 1970s in Nicaragua, Guatemala and El Salvador. As illustrated in Table 1 below,²⁶ the surge in migration these three countries seeking refuge in the USA drastically increased from 113,000 in the 1970s to 353,900 in 1980, to the current surge of over 3 immigrants million today.

Between 1980 and 1990, it is estimated that over 1 million Central Americans (i.e. El Salvador, Guatemala and Nicaragua) sought refuge in the United States as political refugees.²⁷ At the height of the civil conflict, human rights groups regularly reported high levels of government-led repression in the region:²⁸ (1) In Guatemala, over 200,000 civilians lost their lives during 40 years of civilian conflict, and (2) In El Salvador, more than 75,000 civilians were killed and many

²⁶ <http://www.migrationpolicy.org/article/central-american-immigrants-united-states-1>

²⁷ Gzesh, Susan. "Central Americans and Asylum Policy in the Reagan Era." *Migration Policy Institute*. April 2006 (<http://www.migrationpolicy.org/article/central-americans-and-asylum-policy-reagan-era>)

²⁸ <http://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/1998/12/dirty-hands/377364/>

thousands more civilians disappeared.²⁹ US Secretary of State Alexander Haig³⁰ famously declared in the first weeks of President Reagan's presidency that the US would "draw the line in Central America against Communist interference."³¹

Table 1: Central American Immigrants in the United States, 1960 to 2011

Year	Central Americans	% of all Immigrants	% of Latino Immigrants
1960	48,900	0.5	5.4
1970	113,900	1.2	6.3
1980	353,900	2.5	8.1
1990	1,134,000	5.7	13.5
2000	2,026,200	6.5	12.6
2010	3,052,500	7.6	14.4
2011	3,085,400	7.6	14.5

Source: US Census Bureau, 1960-2000 Decennial Census, 2010 and 2011 American Community Surveys

After the triumph of the Sandinistas in Nicaragua in 1979, stopping the Cuban revolution expansion to other countries in Latin America became the US's number-one foreign policy priority. The US provided the governments of El Salvador and Guatemala with billions of dollars in military aid to fight Guerrilla-led insurgencies in both countries. The US also financed the Contras, a military force

²⁹ Coutin, Susan. "The Odyssey of Salvadoran Asylum Seekers." Report on Nicaragua and El Salvador. NCLA Report on the Americas. Vol XXXVII, No. 6 May/June 2004

³⁰ <http://www.upi.com/Archives/1981/03/03/Secretary-of-State-Alexander-Haig-made-a-fervent-plea/1460352443600/>

³¹ <http://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/1998/12/dirty-hands/377364/>

based in Honduras, fighting against the Sandinistas in Nicaragua³² causing the displacement of hundreds of thousands of Honduran peasants.

Societal Reception:

Denial of Political Asylum to Central American Refugees

Between 1980 and 1990, at the height of civil unrest in the Central American region, 97% of Salvadorans and Guatemalans who submitted political asylum applications upon their arrival in the US were denied political asylum. As a matter of comparison, it is important to notice that during the same period, applicants fleeing governments' unfriendly to US interest (Cuba and Nicaragua) were approved for asylum at rates ranging from 32% to 60%.³³ The US foreign policy position in Nicaragua was against the Sandinista government, therefore, anyone fleeing Nicaragua at the time was granted asylum in a more lenient process than that for Salvadorans and Guatemalans who were fleeing US-supported regimes.³⁴

The ability of the US to treat similarly situated groups differently was based on the design of the Refugee Act of 1980, which allowed for the consideration of foreign policy positions when determining which groups qualified as political refugees.³⁵ The law at the time gave the executive branch broad discretion in

³² <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/articles/A29546-2004Jun9.html>

³³ Coutin, Susan. *"The Odyssey of Salvadoran Asylum Seekers."* Report on Nicaragua and El Salvador. NCLA Report on the Americas. Vol XXXVII, No. 6 May/June 2004

³⁴ Dias, Jennifer. Central Americans in America: Arguments for Policy Adjustment. 10th Annual South Florida Latin American and Caribbean Studies Graduate Student Conference. Florida International University. April 19th, 2012.

³⁵ Coffino Eli, *"A Long Road to Residency: The legal history of Salvadoran and Guatemalan Immigration to the US with Focus on NACARA."* Journal of International and Comparative Law, 177-2006 from Hein Online

defining “fear of persecution,”³⁶ by requiring that anyone seeking asylum proved a “well-founded fear of individual persecution on account of race, religion, nationality, membership in a particular social group, or a political opinion....³⁷” For most Salvadorans and Guatemalans, proving “individual persecution” from their US supported government became a difficult threshold to achieve. As a matter of foreign policy, during the 1980’s the Reagan Administration public position was one of denial of engagement in the Central American region resulting in the systematic denial of the political asylum requests for Salvadorans and Guatemalans who arrived in the US beginning in the 1980s.

This systematic policy of denial of political refugee status marked the context of arrival for Salvadoran and Guatemalan immigrants within a hostile framework of economic insecurity and limited legality. The rejection of their refugee claim meant the denial of access to a formal incorporation regime (i.e. legal papers to work, access to housing, education, healthcare and other services) that was made available to other similarly situated refugees of the time such as Cubans and Nicaraguans. Without legal papers to access government services, this community relied solely on the aid provided by churches, non-profit organizations, and local immigrant rights networks that sympathized with their refugee plight. The regulatory framework that denied their initial refugee claims also limited this

³⁶ Dias, Jennifer. Central Americans in America: Arguments for Policy Adjustment. 10th Annual South Florida Latin American and Caribbean Studies Graduate Student Conference. Florida International University. April 19th, 2012.

³⁷ Ramji-Nogales, Jaya. Andrew I. Schoenholtz. Philip G Schrag. Refugee Roulette; Disparities in Asylum Adjudication and proposals for reform. New York New York University Press. 2009

group's ability to eventually make "rights demands" to settle as permanent residents and be granted a path to US citizenship. The initial denial of access to this formal incorporation regime meant that this group of immigrants upon arrival faced limited economic mobility, limited access to formal jobs, no funding for training/education opportunities, and limited access to social welfare services like affordable housing and healthcare. Salvadorans, Guatemalan, and Honduran refugees had to depend wholly on their own informal networks of family, fellow co-nationals, and friendly allies to help them build an infrastructure to settle in the USA and begin to collectively make demands for the right to live and work legally in the United States.³⁸

CO-ETHNIC COMMUNITIES: Social Capital and Rights Claims

The informal network of co-nationals and allies that assisted Salvadoran and Guatemalan political refugees upon arrival in the 1980s were mostly community organizations led by other co-nationals and religious organizations who opposed US military involvement in Central America.³⁹ Working together as part of the movement to end the wars in Central America, leaders of these groups

³⁸ Menjivar, Cecilia. "Liminal Legality: Salvadoran and Guatemalan Immigrants' Lives in the United States." University of Chicago. AJS Volume 11 No. 4 Jan 2006.

³⁹ The complete number/name of community organizations in the Central American community are difficult to identify, as there are very few actual records and or listing of them. However, some of the most prominent groups organizing Central American migrants since the early 1980s are: El Rescate LA, CHIRLA, CARECEN-LA, CARECEN-DC, CRECEN-Houston, Centro Romero-Chicago, Centro PRESENTE-Boston, Centro Comunitario-CEUS-NJ, CARECEN-NY, and Centro Cuzcatlan-New York. During this same time, CISPE (The Committee in Solidarity with the People of El Salvador) was formed as an allied organization working to mobilize American citizens against President Reagan's involvement in the Salvadoran civil war. These organizations were critical in expanding the number of allies in the US religious community who supported refugee rights for Salvadorans and Guatemalans. In the early 1990s, NDLO (the National Day Laborers Organizing Network) emerged as a group advocating for the rights of Central American day-laborers in Los Angeles, CA. Since then, NDLO has expanded its reach nationally and are now the leaders of the #SaveTPS Campaign.

successfully organized a network of hundreds of allies such as churches, synagogues, and elected officials in cities throughout the US that declared themselves “sanctuaries of refuge” for Guatemalan and Salvadoran political refugees.⁴⁰ Learning from other activist networks, this movement marked the beginning of what today is known as the Sanctuary Movement for Central American political refugees. The Sanctuary Movement became the first phase on the social movement-organizing trajectory of these migrants.

Those who supported the sanctuary movement engaged in different forms of political agency to advance the Central American refugee crisis: rallies, lobbying, marches, civil disobedience, protest, and class-action lawsuits. One prominent lawsuit became known as the 1985 American Baptist Church vs. Thornburg case, also known as “The ABC Case.” This class-action lawsuit argued that the US Government was discriminatory in the application of the 1980 US Refugee Act. The case sought to end discrimination against “asylum seekers based on foreign policy considerations and a finding that Salvadorans and Guatemalans were entitled to safe haven from persecution.⁴¹” This case was eventually settled by the Administration of President Bush in 1992, and comprised the first recognition that indeed the US Government had purposely discriminated against Central Americans political refugees based on foreign policy considerations.

⁴⁰ Coutin, Susan. *“The Odyssey of Salvadoran Asylum Seekers.”* Report on Nicaragua and El Salvador. NCLA Report on the Americas. Vol XXXVII, No. 6 May/June 2004

⁴¹ Weitzhandler, Ari. “TPS: The Congressional Response to the Plight of Salvadoran Aliens.” University of Colorado Legal Review V. 64 249 1993

Paradox of Rights: The Enactment of TPS

For most of the early 1980s, the Central American wars were mostly an after-thought for the American public. However, in 1989 the US involvement in the Central American wars became a political liability for the Reagan administration when the US-trained and financed Salvadoran military killed four Jesuit Catholic priests at the Catholic University of El Salvador.⁴² The brutality of the murders became emblematic of the type of human rights abuses President Reagan's Administration was supporting with its foreign policy positions, forcing the political discourse in the US Congress to finally shift away from unconditional denial of the Central American refugee crisis to acknowledgement of a need to reverse policy in the region. Public outcry against the US role in the Salvadoran war finally forced the US Congress to demand the end of the US involvement in the Salvadoran war and an end to the discrimination of Salvadoran refugees in the USA. However, rather than accept the demand from activists to grant a blanket application of refugee status to all refugees who had been denied political asylum on foreign policy basis, the response of the US Congress was to enact TPS and grant group status to refugees from El Salvador. At the time, TPS was described as a temporary measure to protect Salvadorans refugees from deportation while Congress began a process of reviewing and reforming US refugee policy.

⁴² <http://www.nytimes.com/1989/11/17/world/6-priests-killed-in-a-campus-raids-in-san-salvador.html>

Guatemalans and Hondurans, despite being similarly situated at the time, were not included as beneficiaries of the original TPS designation. However, with the passage of time, the original intent was forgotten and those Salvadorans under its designation looked for other avenues to gain legality.

REGULATORY LEGAL FRAMEWORK

Legality without Access to Citizenship Rights

The 1990 TPS program granted Salvadorans temporary safe haven while the US Courts adjudicated their claims of discrimination under the 1980 Refugee Act.⁴³ While Congress at the time also stated that TPS could be granted to any other group of people residing illegally in the US at a time of a political or an environmental catastrophe in their home countries, it failed to proffer any guidance on what to do about Guatemalans and Hondurans. Instead, Congress designated the Executive Branch as the final arbitrator of the TPS benefit, setting up the eventual process by which the TPS program eventually transformed itself into a permanent humanitarian relief program granted by the State Department based on foreign policy grounds. Today, rather than recognizing that the TPS program was a temporary fix in the application of refugee law towards an entire class of political refugees, this program is described by both the Executive Branch and the US Congress as solely a humanitarian relief program to aid foreign citizens who are in the US at the time their home countries suffer a natural disaster. The

⁴³ <http://www.migrationpolicy.org/article/temporary-protected-status-united-states-grant-humanitarian-relief-less-permanent>

evolution of TPS from a refugee to a humanitarian program has become a political paradox; while TPS originally acknowledged Salvadoran refugees as deserving of rights, it also created the space to deny this same group access to permanent rights.

The ABC Case: Consequences and Its Impact on TPS Extension

The enactment of the program emboldened the civil society coalition behind the sanctuary movement to mobilize politically to pressure the administration of President George W Bush to agree to a negotiated settlement of the ABC class action lawsuit. Congress's recognition of TPS for Salvadorans reinforced the argument that they were deserving of refugee status, thus forcing the Bush Administration in 1990 to grant "all Salvadorans who had resided in the US as of September 19, 1990, and all Guatemalans residing in the USA since October 1990, de novo asylum adjudication."⁴⁴ The ABC class settlement of 1991 granted all those denied political asylum in the 1980s, including Guatemalans, a "de novo" review of their asylum application. As an additional benefit, everyone who registered for a review of their asylum application would be granted TPS while their cases were adjudicated.

⁴⁴ Coffino Eli, "A Long Road to Residency: The legal history of Salvadoran and Guatemalan Immigration to the US with Focus on NACARA." *Journal of International and Comparative Law*, 177-2006 from Hein Online Pg. 188

At this point, two classes of TPS holders existed: those who received TPS via Congress in 1990 with no path to permanent residency and those who received it via the ABC settlement of 1991 and were re-inserted into the political asylum process. Despite the new opportunity to apply, the success rate for asylum only increased slightly to 28% for Salvadorans and 18% for Guatemalans, with a path to citizenship only granted to approximately 650,000 Salvadorans and Guatemalans.⁴⁵ With the passage of time, many hundreds-of-thousands more Central Americans were denied asylum because the legal adjudication process lagged for many years and, eventually, the individual claim of “fear of persecution” became hard to prove.⁴⁶ The ending of the wars and the peace settlement agreements in both El Salvador (1992) and Guatemala (1996) removed the argument of unsafe conditions for return and the asylum cases of the majority of applicants became invalid.

Denial of Equal Treatment: The Immigration Reform of 1996 (IIRIRA)

The ABC class settlement successfully legalized a total of 650,000 Salvadorans and Guatemalans out of over a million refugees already residing in the USA.⁴⁷ For those whose cases were denied, they continued to move through the legal system by applying for a form of deportation relief called a “cancellation of

⁴⁵ Cannon, Robert. “A Reevaluation of the Relationship of the Administrative Procedure Act to Asylum Hearings: The Ramifications of the American Baptist Churches’ Settlement,” 5 ADMIN. L.J. pg. 713, 714 (1991)

⁴⁶ Mejivar, Cecilia. “Liminal Legality: Salvadoran and Guatemalan Immigrants’ Lives in the United States.” University of Chicago. AJS Volume 11 No. 4 (Jan 2006) Pg. 1013

⁴⁷ Cannon, Robert. “A Reevaluation of the Relationship of the Administrative Procedure Act to Asylum Hearings: The Ramifications of the American Baptist Churches’ Settlement,” 5 ADMIN. L.J. pg. 713, 714 (1991)

deportation.”⁴⁸ However, by the 1990s the anti-immigrant movement had taken roots in the US, and 1996 President Clinton enacted Illegal Immigration Reform and Immigration Responsibility Act (IIRIRA) which eliminated “cancellation of deportation” for any immigrant already residing in the United States including Salvadorans and Guatemalans.⁴⁹ Instead, the IIRIRA created a new process called “suspension of removal” which eliminated the use of personal hardship. Under IIRIRA, all former ABC class members had to prove: (1) 10 years of continuous presence in the USA and (2) proof that his/her removal would cause “exceptional and extreme unusual hardship to an American citizen or a permanent resident spouse, parent or child.”⁵⁰ IIRIRA also created an annual cap of 4,000 total suspensions granted per year, making it mostly impossible for hundreds of thousands of Salvadorans and Guatemalans to receive a favorable suspension. In the end, despite years of protection under TPS and via the ABC Settlement, IIRIRA forced hundreds of thousands of Salvadorans and Guatemalans refugees to return to a status of illegality.

NACARA: Unequal Treatment to Equally-Situated Refugees

The elimination of “cancellation of deportation” under IIRIRA created complications for the first time for Nicaraguan political refugees. Prior to the signing of the

⁴⁸ Coffino Eli, “A Long Road to Residency: The legal history of Salvadoran and Guatemalan Immigration to the US with Focus on NACARA.” *Journal of International and Comparative Law*, 177-2006 from Hein Online Pg. 189

⁴⁹ Coutin, Susan. “*The Odyssey of Salvadoran Asylum Seekers*.” Report on Nicaragua and El Salvador. NCLA Report on the Americas. Vol XXXVII, No. 6 May/June 2004, pg. 40

⁵⁰ Coffino Eli, “A Long Road to Residency: The legal history of Salvadoran and Guatemalan Immigration to the US with Focus on NACARA.” *Journal of International and Comparative Law*, 177-2006 from Hein Online Pg. 189

peace accords in Nicaragua in 1990,⁵¹ asylum cases for Nicaraguans were easily granted. However, after the end of the war, the number of asylum cases adjudicated in their favor decreased, and deportations for this group began to rise. Acknowledging that Nicaraguans had more political leverage in places like Florida and could move critical Republican votes in Congress, Salvadorans and Guatemalans advocacy groups joined efforts with Nicaraguans to renew their push for Congress to enact a new piece of legislation that would grant legal permanent residency for all Central Americans. In November of 1997, after months of a national mobilization campaign supported by national immigrant rights groups, Congress enacted the Nicaraguan and Central American Relief Act (NACARA). Despite the original demand of equal treatment for all Central American nationals, the final legislation once again treated Nicaraguans better than it treated Salvadorans and Guatemalans. The final bill granted the following separate level of benefits to similarly situated groups based on the foreign policy considerations:⁵²

1. Nicaraguans who had been denied asylum prior to Dec 1st, 1995 could re-apply for adjustment of status to lawful permanent residency;
2. Salvadorans and Guatemalans who were denied asylum in their first application, could re-apply for suspension of deportation under the pre-IIRIRA rules.⁵³

⁵¹ <http://www.nytimes.com/1990/04/20/world/cease-fire-begins-in-nicaragua-as-the-contras-agree-to-disarm.html>

⁵² Coffino Eli, "A Long Road to Residency: The legal history of Salvadoran and Guatemalan Immigration to the US with Focus on NACARA." *Journal of International and Comparative Law*, 177-2006 from Hein Online Pg. 189

⁵³ <http://www.cannlaw.com/countryspecific/NacaraCS.htm>

NACARA once again openly discriminated against similarly situated immigrants by granting them different benefits under US immigration law. Nicaraguans who had fled a communist regime were granted an immediate path to permanent residency, while Guatemalans and Salvadorans who fled US-friendly anti-communist governments during the same period, were forced to re-apply for asylum without any guarantees of successful review of their claims. In the end, only a few Salvadorans and Guatemalans were granted a positive outcome, and the majority of their cases were denied.

As we have seen from the historical timeline, the context of arrival for Salvadorans and Guatemalans was fraught from the beginning with an ever-changing regulatory regime that kept the majority of the population in legal limbo for several decades, never allowing them to establish themselves as permanent refugees with legal rights to settle. Compared to Nicaraguans and Cubans, this context of arrival was unwelcoming and limited this group's ability to build social and economic capital. It also meant that without a permanent path to citizenship rights, they were not able to gain sufficient social mobility and political capital to push for rights for the thousands of fellow co-nationals and family members who followed them to the United States. As we will study later, the context of arrival determines a group's eventual assimilation because it impacts how the group experiences integration. It also determines whether they are able to build enough formal

political influence to improve the future social and economic capital accumulation for their descendants.

TPS Evolution: a Tool for Humanitarian Relief

Since NACARA only provided permanent legal status for a small number of Salvadorans and Guatemalans, the post-war immigrants who entered the USA after 1990 did not have any avenues to apply for family reunification rights or to request legal entry to the US. Hence, by the early 2000s, the population of undocumented Central Americans continued to grow and eventually reached over two million. As the total population of undocumented immigrants grew, the anti-immigrant political sentiment in the USA reduced any spaces to demand a broad legalization program for the undocumented, and further reduced any opportunities to revive a claim of discrimination and a right for permanence for Central Americans.

Nevertheless, the opportunity to claim TPS protection based on humanitarian reasons for this population opened up again in the early 2000s when two natural disasters impacted the region:

- (1) In 1998 Hurricane Mitch caused massive destruction to Honduras and Nicaragua. In response the administration of Pres. Bill Clinton granted TPS to approximately 70,000 Hondurans and Nicaraguans; and

(2) In 2001, two consecutive massive earthquakes in El Salvador⁵⁴ killed thousands of people and displaced over one million Salvadorans. In response, President George W. Bush granted TPS to any Salvadoran who was present in the United States as of February 13, 2001. This time, more than 260,000 Salvadorans applied and were granted TPS protection.⁵⁵

This last humanitarian designation for Salvadorans, Hondurans, and Nicaraguans has been continuously renewed by Republican and Democratic administrations since 2001. As illustrated in Table 2, it is currently set to expire on separate dates in the years 2019 and 2020.

Since its enactment in 1990, nineteen countries have been designated for TPS protection. Beginning with El Salvador, only five other designations are due to war and civil conflict: Sudan, Somalia, Liberia, Yemen and Syria. As illustrated in Tables 3 and 4, the other TPS designations occurred following natural disasters and in collaboration with the governments of those countries.

⁵⁴ <http://www.geologie.ens.fr/~madariag/Papers/El%20Salvador%20Earthquakes.PDF>

⁵⁵ <http://www.migrationpolicy.org/article/temporary-protected-status-united-states-grant-humanitarian-relief-less-permanent>

Table 2: Expiration of Current TPS Designation⁵⁶

Country	Most Recent Designation Date	Secretary's Decision Due	Expiration Date
Sudan	5/3/2013	N/A	11/2/2018
Nicaragua	1/5/1999	N/A	1/5/2019
South Sudan	5/3/2016	3/3/2019	5/2/2019
Nepal	6/24/2015	N/A	6/24/2019
Haiti	7/23/2011	N/A	7/22/2019
El Salvador	3/9/2001	N/A	9/9/2019
Syria	8/1/2016	8/1/2019	9/30/2019
Honduras	1/5/1999	N/A	1/5/2020
Yemen	3/4/2017	1/3/2020	3/3/2020
Somalia	9/18/2012	1/17/2020	3/17/2020

Table 3: Countries designated for TPS and reasons granted as of 2013⁵⁷

Country	Years TPS status granted	Current TPS expiration date	Reason(s) granted
Syria	2012-present	March 31, 2015	Civil conflict
Haiti	2010-present	January 22, 2016	Aftermath of earthquake
Honduras	1999-present	January 5, 2015	Aftermath of Hurricane Mitch
Nicaragua	1999-present	January 5, 2015	Aftermath of Hurricane Mitch
Sudan	1997- present	November 2, 2014	Civil conflict
South Sudan	2011 (1997)*- present	November 2, 2014	Civil conflict
Somalia	1991- present	September 17, 2015	Civil conflict
El Salvador	1991-1992 2001-present	March 9, 2015	Civil war Aftermath of earthquakes

* TPS was first granted to residents of South Sudan in 1997 while still a part of Sudan. For the latest designation of TPS and their expiration, visit the following sources: U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services, "Temporary Protected Status," last accessed May 14th, 2018, www.uscis.gov/humanitarian/temporary-protected-status-deferred-enforced-departure/temporary-protected-status; Ruth Ellen Wasem and Karma Ester, Temporary Protected Status: Current Immigration Policy and Issues (Washington, DC: Congressional Research Service, 2011), www.fas.org/sgp/crs/homsec/RS20844.pdf.

⁵⁶ <https://immigrationforum.org/article/fact-sheet-temporary-protected-status/>

⁵⁷ <http://www.migrationpolicy.org/article/temporary-protected-status-united-states-grant-humanitarian-relief-less-permanent>

Table 4: TPS Designation by President Obama since 2008

Guinea	Granted by Pres. Obama in 2015 after outbreak of Ebola virus in West Africa
Liberia	First granted by Pres. Bush after the outbreak of civil war in 1991. Pres. Obama extended TPS in 2009 and again in 2014 because of the Ebola outbreak
Yemen	Granted by Pres. Obama in 2015 because of ongoing conflict
Nepal	Granted by Pres. Obama in 2015 after earthquake
Sierra Leone	Granted by Pres. Obama in 2015 after outbreak of Ebola virus in West Africa

As illustrated in Table 5, based on the latest by-country designations, there are currently 358,800 TPS holders.⁵⁸

Table 5: NUMBER OF TPS BENEFICIARIES as of September 2015

Country	Numbers	Year TPS Granted
El Salvador	212,000	1991, 2001, present
Honduras	64,000	1999, present
Haiti	58,000	2010, present
Nicaragua	3,000	1999, present
Syria	2,600	2012-present
Somalia	400	1991, present
Sudan	300	1999, present
South Sudan	500	1997, present
Guinea	2,000	2014, present
Liberia	4,000	1991, 2009, present
Nepal	10,000	2015, present
Sierra Leone	2,000	2015, present
Yemen	--- (unknown at time of publication)	2015, present
TOTAL	358,800	

⁵⁸ <http://www.fas.org/sgp/crs/homesec/RS20844.pdf> as of Feb 2016.

Examining Temporality

This dissertation focuses on the specific experience of this class of Central American refugees whom since the beginning of their American experience, have only received a marginal immigration benefit (i.e. the right to work legally) but not a permanent legal identity that could give them the right to reunite with their families, acquire citizenships rights, and permanently settle in the United States as new citizens. By focusing on the largest beneficiaries of the program, who have similar traits in terms of race and ethnicity, this study will attempt to analyze the impact that their context of arrival has had on their integration experience.

This study does not include the experiences of other long term TPS holders (i.e. Haitians, Syrians, Somalians, etc.) as their numbers, except for Haitians, are not as large as those of Central Americans. Further, adding Haitians to the study would add the variable of race as Haitians have to manage issues of racism (in the context of anti-black sentiment) in addition to issues of legal insecurity as they maneuver their integration experience in the USA. For TPS holders of Middle-Eastern countries (i.e. Syria, Somalia etc), race and religion (i.e. Muslim religion) are also factors that further differentiate their experience from those of Central Americans. For the majority of Central Americans, their race, ethnicity and

religion are similar hence their group experience can more easily be aggregated into significant analysis, conclusions and policy recommendations.

Central American TPS holders are the largest group of US immigrants that has lived in a long-term state of legal temporality. Despite their right to work legally, their record of good moral standing, and their proof of paying local and federal taxes as a condition of TPS renewal, they are still considered by the American polity as temporary immigrants.

CHAPTER TWO: INDIVIDUAL TRAITS AND GROUP DYNAMICS

This study focuses on the specific experience of Central American TPS holders whom since the beginning of their American experience have only received a marginal immigration benefit (i.e. the right to work legally) but not the right to access a permanent legal identity. This state of permanent temporality has impacted their social economic mobility (SES), and their formal levels of political participation. In order to understand the dynamics within which this group of immigrants exist, it is important to understand the demographic make-up of the larger Central American community currently living in the US.

Demographic Profile of the Central American Population

Central Americans today are 8.3% of the US Latino population, third in numbers to Mexicans and Puerto Ricans. As illustrated in Table 6, Central Americans are as well the second-largest group of irregular immigrants to the US after Mexicans.⁵⁹

Counted among these numbers of irregular immigrants are the 260,000 Central Americans under TPS who are not technically considered unauthorized and therefore are not counted under any permanent resident immigrant category.⁶⁰ They are not “legal residents” because their actual existence in any one category

⁵⁹ <http://www.migrationpolicy.org/data/unauthorized-immigrant-population/state/US>

⁶⁰ https://www.dhs.gov/sites/default/files/publications/ois_ill_pe_2012_2.pdf pg. 1

at any given time is difficult to track. A TPS holder can be in and out-of-status for many reasons, including missing deadlines or having documentation lost in transit. While they have a permit to work, they are also not included in the number of temporary worker-visa holders because they are not covered under any of the regulations of the temporary work-visa arrangements like H1B, H2A, or H2B. Those visas require a worker to leave the country after their temporary work arrangement ends.⁶¹

Table 6: Hispanic Population, by Origin, 2011⁶²

All Hispanics	55 million	% of Hispanics
Mexican	33.5	64.6
Puerto Rican	4.9	9.5
Salvadoran	1.9	3.8
Cuban	1.8	3.6
Dominican	1.5	2.9
Guatemalan	1.2	2.3
Colombian	.989	1.9
Spaniard	.707	1.4
Honduran	.702	1.4
Ecuadorian	.645	1.2
Peruvian	.556	1.1
Nicaraguan	.395	0.8
Venezuelan	.259	0.5
Argentinean	.242	0.5

Note: Total Central American Population is 8.3% of total Hispanic pop

⁶¹ H1B visa is a program for businesses hiring foreign workers for specific positions in the U.S. in highly trained job categories. The H2B Visa program is meant for businesses that hire seasonal or peak-season employees for temporary non-agricultural jobs. H2A are temporary visas for workers in the agriculture industry. For more information visit <https://www.uscis.gov/working-united-states/temporary-workers/h-2b-temporary-non-agricultural-workers>.

⁶² <https://www.census.gov/newsroom/facts-for-features/2015/cb15-ff18.html>

Because of their non-categorical-existence, data collection on any of the usual socioeconomic status (SES) indicators has been difficult to gather as there is no a central data source tracking their mobility, work and earning capacity since joining the program. Most TPS holders reside in population hubs similar to those of many undocumented workers, and hence are often identified as possessing similar economic and labor force participation options as those without legal authorization. This chapter reviews the SES of the undocumented Central American community as available through the 2010 US Census, and reviews the limited literature available on the specific socio-economic status (SES) of current TPS holders as presented by Menjivar 2017.

A profile of the un-authorized

As of 2012, the recorded numbers of unauthorized migrants from the northern triangle countries of Central America were reported as follows: El Salvador (690,000), Guatemala (560,000) and Honduras (360,000).⁶³

As illustrated in Table 7, the total number of undocumented Central Americans stand at 1.6 million and represents 15% of the total unauthorized population in the USA. Of this number, approximately 279,000 are TPS holders.⁶⁴ The current

⁶³ https://www.dhs.gov/sites/default/files/publications/ois_ill_pe_2012_2.pdf

⁶⁴ <http://www.migrationpolicy.org/article/central-american-immigrants-united-states>

breakdown of Central America under TPS is as follows: El Salvador (212,000), Honduras (64,000), and Nicaraguans (3,000).⁶⁵

Table 7: Country of Birth of the Unauthorized Immigrant Population: January 2012 and 2010

Country of Birth	Estimated Population in January		Percent of Total	
	2012	2010	2012	2010
All Countries	11,430,000	11,590,000	100	100
Mexico	6,720,000	6,830,000	59	59
El Salvador	690,000	670,000	6	6
Guatemala	560,000	520,000	5	4
Honduras	360,000	380,000	3	3
Philippines	310,000	290,000	3	2
India	260,000	270,000	2	2
Korea	230,000	220,000	2	2
China	210,000	300,000	2	3
Ecuador	170,000	210,000	2	2
Vietnam	160,000	190,000	1	2
Other countries	1,760,000	1,720,000	15	15

* Details may not sum to totals because of rounding. Source: US Department of Homeland Security.

Age, education, and employment

As illustrated in Table 8, compared to the overall foreign-born population, Central American unauthorized immigrants are younger and have lower levels of formal education. However, they have higher levels of workforce participation compared to both the foreign and native population.

⁶⁵ <http://www.fas.org/sgp/crs/homesec/RS20844.pdf> as of Feb 2016.

Table 8. Age Distribution by Origin, 2013⁶⁶

Age Group	All Immigrants	Central American Immigrants	Native Born
Under 18	6%	6%	26%
18 to 64	80%	87%	60%
65 and over	14%	7%	14%

According to a recent study by the Migration Policy Institute:

...[A]bout 75 percent of Central American immigrants ages 16 and over were in the civilian labor force, compared to 67 percent and 63 percent of all foreign and native born, respectively... Central American immigrants were significantly more likely to be employed in service occupations (34 percent); natural resources, construction, and maintenance occupations (22 percent); and production, transportation, and material-moving occupations (18 percent) than both the overall foreign- and native-born populations.⁶⁷

As of 2011, the majority of the unauthorized Central American population was 53% male with roughly 47% female. As outlined earlier, although this group has higher levels of labor force participation, they are concentrated in low, unskilled, paying jobs and, therefore, they are more likely to live in poverty (23%) than the

⁶⁶ Source: MPI tabulation of data from the U.S. Census Bureau, 2013 ACS. Numbers may not add up to 100 as they are rounded to the nearest whole number.

⁶⁷ <http://www.migrationpolicy.org/article/central-american-immigrants-united-states>

native born (15%) or foreign-born, overall (20%) population.⁶⁸

Geographic Distribution of the Central American Population in the USA

The majority of Central American immigrants in the US have settled in three states, California (28%), Texas (11%) and Florida (11%).

Table 9: Concentrations by Metro Area-Foreign-Born Central Americans 2009-2013

Metropolitan Area	Immigrant Population from Central America	% of Metro Area Population
Los Angeles-Long Beach-Anaheim, CA	561,000	4.3
New York-Newark-Jersey City, NY-NJ-PA	365,000	1.9
Washington-Arlington-Alexandria, DC-VA-MD-WV	264,000	4.6
Miami-Fort Lauderdale-West Palm Beach, FL	240,000	4.2
Houston-The Woodlands-Sugar Land, TX	201,000	3.3
San Francisco-Oakland-Hayward, CA	107,000	2.4
Dallas-Fort Worth-Arlington, TX	86,000	1.3
Riverside-San Bernardino-Ontario, CA	68,000	1.6
Boston-Cambridge-Newton, MA-NH	64,000	1.4
Atlanta-Sandy Springs-Roswell, GA	59,000	1.1

Source: MPI tabulation of data from the U.S. Census Bureau pooled 2009-13 ACS.

However, as shown in Table 9 above, the largest concentration of this population is located in three major metropolitan areas: (1) Los Angeles/Long Beach/Anaheim, CA; (2) New York-Newark, Jersey City, NJ; and (3) the Washington,

⁶⁸ <http://www.migrationpolicy.org/article/central-american-immigrants-united-states-1#11>

DC/MD/VA area.⁶⁹ The places where these immigrants concentrate determine the type of economic, political, and social constraints or opportunities they encounter when navigating their local integration process.

TPS Profile: Salvadoran, Hondurans & Nicaraguans

As stated earlier, a TPS holder can be in and out-of-status for many reasons, including missing deadlines or documentation getting lost in transit. Because of this uncertainty, longitudinal studies of this group's specific SES have rarely been undertaken. Nevertheless, Cecilia Menjivar (2017),⁷⁰ recently conducted the most comprehensive evaluation of the SES of the TPS population by surveying more than 2,098 TPS holders from El Salvador and Honduras. The study participants responded to a randomized telephone and in-person survey in six cities across the US: Los Angeles, Houston, Washington DC, San Francisco, New York and New Jersey.

Menjivar's recent findings revealed the following key points about the demographic profile of TPS holders from El Salvador and Honduras:

1. 93.9 % of TPS holders and 82.1% of women are currently working, a higher rate than any other population

⁶⁹ <http://www.migrationpolicy.org/article/central-american-immigrants-united-states-1#11>

⁷⁰ Menjivar, Cecilia. "Temporary Protective Status in the USA: The Experience of Hondurans and Salvadoran Immigrants." Center for Migration Research. University of Kansas." May 2017. (http://ipsr.ku.edu/migration/pdf/TPS_Report.pdf)

2. Approximately 77% of TPS holders send remittances to their home countries. Men send an average of \$303 per month and women send an average of \$226 per month
3. 90% of TPS holders file taxes every year, and they have contributed to Social Security and Medicare through payroll taxes for an average of 15.4 years
4. 31.9% of TPS holders own their home
5. The average monthly income of the survey respondents is \$2,909.87 (men=\$3,597.64; women=\$2,054.31)
6. Men work in construction (18.9%), and service related industries (21.6%) while women concentrate in cleaning (28.7%), childcare (7.6%), cooking (6.0%) and clothing manufacturing (5.8%).

This study re-affirms other findings confirming that Central American TPS holders have a higher level of labor participation than the general population. Compared to the undocumented whose labor participation is at 87%, TPS holders level of workforce participation stands higher at 93.9%. In spite of this, their earnings (which average \$2909 per month) still fall well below average earnings for workers across all job categories (average earning for US workers is \$51,931).⁷¹

⁷¹ <https://www.cnbc.com/2017/08/24/how-much-americans-earn-at-every-age.html>

These findings also re-affirm similar other findings⁷² which reveal that the biggest benefit of having TPS is the access it gives to a work permit which allows workers the ability to obtain a driver license and look for better job choices unencumbered by the lack of transportation. More job choices lead to higher levels of employment for women and higher earnings for men. In general, men with TPS earn 13% higher wages than those who are undocumented. However, despite having a legal right to work, TPS holders are still vulnerable to exploitation as workplace violations identified among TPS respondents are similar to those experienced by undocumented workers. While the work-permit gives them legal right to work, the temporality of the benefit does not transform itself into a tool that allows them to demand better rights and opportunities at work.⁷³ As stated by Menjivar (2006), the temporary nature of the right truncates the immigrant's process of socioeconomic advancement. While TPS holders have access to better jobs than the undocumented, the uncertainty of their status hinders their ability to make long-term demands for rights at work and personal investments in their human capital development. In this sense, as stated by Waters & Gerstein-Pineau (2016), "TPS confers partial inclusion while simultaneously affirming permanent exclusion."⁷⁴

⁷² Orrenious, Pia M and Madeline Zavodny. 2015. "The Impact of Temporary Protective Status on Immigrant Labor Market Outcomes." *American Economic Review* 105 (5): 576-80.

⁷³ For further research onto how access to a work-permit via TPS doesn't necessarily translate into better opportunities to demand better working conditions or wages in the workplace see Griffith and Gleeson's article "*The Precarity of Temporality: How Law Inhibits Immigrant Worker Claims.*" *Comp. Labor Law and Policy Journal*. Vol. 39:111. Jan 23, 2018.

⁷⁴ Waters, Mary and Marisa Gernstein Pineau. 2016. "The Integration of Immigrants into American Society." Washington DC: National Academies of Science, Engineering and Medicine.

Another finding in Menjivar's study is that the most critical benefit of TPS is the relief from deportation which, for the majority of this population, translates into lower levels of anxiety for the individual and their families. This includes less stress in their physical and mental health due to the alleviation of constant fear of forced family separation from their children.⁷⁵ Obtaining a driver's license is another benefit that allows them to have mobility without fear, to participate more in community and their children's activities, and to obtain better housing and education options for their children. In conclusion, Menjivar's study concluded that, for the Salvadoran and Honduran population who participated in her study:

"TPS has meant an increase in quality of life, higher incomes, better jobs, and higher rates of home ownership, among other indicators of integration and well-being. This has translated into benefits for families and communities and society as a whole; as it has allowed TPS holders to actively contribute to society economically, socially and culturally."

Nevertheless, Menjivar (2017) found that while TPS holders do better than the undocumented, they are still economically and socially behind those immigrants who are authorized or naturalized. The lack of family reunification rights keeps TPS holders in a state of forced emotional trauma and punctuated sense of non-belonging, as they are not able to reunite with children left behind and or travel freely to visit relatives back home.

⁷⁵ Aranda, Elizabeth, Cecilia Menjivar, and Katherine M. Donato. 2014. "The Spillover Consequences of an Enforcement First Immigration Regime." *American Behavioral Scientist*. 58 (13): 1687-95

Menjivar (2017) also found that, despite the marked sense of exclusion and lack of family reunification rights, current TPS holders exhibit positive levels of societal integration in their levels of home ownership (at 31.9%). Home ownership is a positive indicator of economic stability and a sense of permanence. TPS holders also exhibit high levels of community engagement (30%) through participation in neighborhood organizations, their children's schools, religious organizations, work related activities, sports teams, and other volunteer causes. As Menjivar concludes, "given that TPS is a temporary status...the fact that one third of TPS holders own a home means that this group seeks to be part of US society and to be active members of their communities."

Examining the Integration Process of TPS Holders

Because TPS holders lack citizenship rights, their integration experience is different than other contemporary Latino legal immigrants who were granted access to citizenship rights, such as Cubans and the majority of Nicaraguans. For the purposes of analysis in this study, integration is defined as a process in a continuum under which recent immigrants interface with formal and informal political systems that aid or limit their individual choices to have access to parity of opportunities with the native population. As explained by Alba & Foner (2015),⁷⁶ the evaluation of integration in this study "refers to the processes that increase the opportunities of immigrants and their descendants to obtain the valued 'stuff' of a

⁷⁶ Alba Richard and Nancy Foner. Strangers No More: Immigration and the Challenges of Integration in North American and Western Europe. Princeton University Press. 2015.

society, as well as social acceptance through participation in major institutions such as educational and political systems and the labor and housing markets.” Therefore, their integration will be evaluated in comparison to the opportunities granted to the members of the community where they reside through local integration regimes and how those regimes generate a sense of “belonging” to the larger community in the US. As described on Menjivar’s study (2017), TPS holders high level of participation in community organizations reveal a positive pattern of “belonging” to their local communities; however, that sense of “belonging” is not expressed by the majority of participants, and her study does not specifically focuses on their own sense of belonging to American society.

Defining Belonging: Comparing TPS & DACA

As explained by Alba & Foner (2015), the belief in America as a melting pot has allowed the existence of hyphenated identities in American society (i.e. Italian-Americans, Mexican-Americans, etc.). However, despite the general acceptance of mixed-cultural identities, full integration and acceptance only happens when the majority native population perceives the new group to have conformed to the values and beliefs of the national society. Even when newer arrivals cling to their ethnic-identity as a matter of economic survival or cultural choice, they must also simultaneously begin the process of proving their allegiance to the native population’s values and norms. The lack of a formal system of incorporation for non-refugees forces new immigrants to rely solely on informal networks of co-ethnics to

gain access to jobs and or housing. The less economic capital a group has to offer to those who follow them later, the longer they stay as members of ethnic-enclaves and the more difficult it becomes for them to shed their ethnic identity and claim an American identity. This strategy of integration is known as the ethnic-social-capital integration⁷⁷ and is best exemplified by Cuban Americans in Miami who, immediately upon arrival, were granted legality. Because the Cubans who fled the Castro revolution were part of Cuba's economic elites, they possessed high levels of socio-economic capital that allow them to quickly create economic enclaves to aided less well-off co-ethnics who migrated after the first large waves of Cuban refugees.

Unlike Cubans, Central Americans experienced a more difficult economic reality upon arrival. As Menjivar (2000)⁷⁸ explains in her book *Fragmented Ties*, because of extra-personal factors such as illegality and the structure of the labor market in the cities where they settled (i.e. San Francisco and LA), the original group of Central Americans who first arrived was resource poor. As a result, they had limited economic ability to assist their newer co-ethnic arrivals. Additionally, the development of human capital for this population was slow and differed greatly as this group possessed lower levels of education, had no-access

⁷⁷ Alba Richard and Nancy Foner. *Strangers No More: Immigration and the Challenges of Integration in North American and Western Europe*. Princeton University Press. 2015. Pg. 240

⁷⁸ Menjivar, Cecilia. *Fragmented Ties: Salvadoran Immigrant Networks in America*. University of California Press Ltd. Berkeley and Los Angeles, California. 2000. Pg. 236-238

government resources such as housing or healthcare, and lacked the ability to secure capital for investing in local businesses and create jobs and services for their co-ethnics.

As Menjivar notes, even among family members, the social networks and exchanges that sustain economic enclaves were strained, as few of them could aide each other economically for long periods of time. This experience led to the formation of poorly resourced Central American enclaves where economic activity was limited and job access was concentrated in low paying service jobs and small business, such as small restaurants and bodegas. Nevertheless, despite limited economic opportunities, Central Americans did undertake a strategy of ethnic-identity-formation that helped them survive as they competed for resources and jobs with other ethnic minorities in their neighborhoods. Immediately upon arrival, they organized networks of local Central American organizations to help them advance “rights-demands” in their communities from their local government structures. Through social movement activism, these local organizations and their leaders have been able to sustain a long-term demand for legalization, while at the same time organizing local coalitions to help them push for the adoption of regimes of inclusion in their local governments. Regimes of inclusion included affordable housing mandates for new immigrants, healthcare access for immigrants, sanctuary rules, and education access and services for families with children (Coutin 2003).

The latest mobilization strategy to demand rights for TPS holders is led by the National TPS Alliance, a coalition of thousands of TPS holders, clergy, non-profits leaders, and other stakeholders like labor unions and social justice organizations.⁷⁹ The TPS holders' trajectory of "rights demands" and their networks of social movement activism have built a sense of political agency as actors in their own struggle for economic survival and acceptance of their existence and contributions to American society.

For the purpose of this research, their initial measurement of integration will start with the evaluation of their informal participation in the American political system through social movement activism. It will continue through the evaluation of their own sense of belonging given their own transnationalism and limited social-economic mobility.

In the evaluation of their rights demands, however, it is important to highlight that their "right to stay" argument has historically been based on an outsider's, not an insider's, narrative. Their central historical argument for a right to stay has been that TPS holders are unable to return home because their home-country's national economic and political conditions cannot handle their return. This narrative

⁷⁹ The National TPS Alliance: <https://www.savetps.com/about>

is focused on external factors of their home country's conditions which, every two years at time of renewal, exposes this group's foreignness. By emphasizing their home country's poverty or violence, and by highlighting the amount of remittances sent to sustain their families back home, this group is faced with a conundrum in managing both their forced internationalism and their level of belonging in their local US communities.

After more than 15 years of the first designation of TPS for Salvadorans, Hondurans, and Nicaraguans, the American polity has yet to acknowledge that TPS holders have developed deep roots in the USA and ought to be allowed to stay permanently. The current "SaveTPS" and "Permanent Residency Now" campaigns seek to transform this conundrum by highlighting TPS holders' level of embeddedness in local economies. The success of this effort to transform their narrative from an outsiders' claim, to an insider's demand, will be measured in the ability of this community to convince the American polity that their long term embeddedness to their local communities demonstrate a heightened sense of "belonging" to American society and hence makes them deserving of permanent legality and eventual citizenship rights.

In order to fully understand the trajectory of TPS holders' demands to belong, it is important to first understand how other similarly-situated immigrants like the

DREAMERs changed their narrative from one of outsiders to one of insiders who belonged to American society. Understanding their efforts will also help determine what conditions one group has, compared to the other, that allows them to have a different trajectory in their ability to define their sense of belonging.

By making the argument that the DREAMERS did not willfully make the decision to enter the United States illegally, their campaign successfully argued that this population was composed of “good immigrants” who were not responsible for the decision of their parents to violate immigration law. Therefore, these immigrants were deserving of the opportunity to belong to America on their own good deeds.⁸⁰ Because the United States Constitution guarantees undocumented children access to basic education (K-12), DREAMERs attended public schools, learned English and adopted the norms and culture of their fellow high-school classmates. Many of them were not aware of their undocumented status until they attempted to do things their fellow American classmates did like get a driver’s license, apply for a job, or continue with their higher education goals. The DREAMER’s campaign strategically exposed their unintended illegality (blamelessness) and made “rights” demands by defining themselves as Americans in all their actions except on their access to papers to work and live in America as adults.

⁸⁰ Nichols, Walter. The Dreamers: How the Undocumented Youth Movement Transformed
Stanford University Press. 2013 Pg. 120

the Immigrant Rights Debate.

Through social movement activism (i.e. rallies, marches, civil disobedience, coming-out parties, story-telling, etc.), the undocumented youth demonstrated their fidelity to American values and beliefs; they knew the language, the culture and the norms, and were willing to demonstrate their industriousness in achieving their American Dream by pursuing higher education and serving in the American military forces (Nichols 2013). By exposing their own illegality and simultaneously affirming their American heritage, they effectively set their own terms for defining “belonging.” In point, they demanded from the American political system an acknowledgement of their existence as undocumented Americans.⁸¹ Given the growing anti-immigrant sentiment in American politics over the last 25 years, the legislative proposal that would grant DREAMERS a path to citizenship never became law, but it pushed American polity sympathetic to their cause to change tactics and find a different solution to their plight.

During the summer of 2011, through civil disobedience and local actions, the DREAMERS confronted President Obama to use his executive powers to grant them relief from deportation through the creation of a temporary program now known as DACA (Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals).⁸² Like TPS, DACA is a temporary fix to the rights claims of undocumented youth. The temporary-fix

⁸¹ The first version of the Development, Relief, and Education for Alien Minors (DREAM) Act was introduced in 2001. As a result, young undocumented immigrants have since been called Dreamers. Over the last 16 years, numerous versions of the Dream Act have been introduced, all of which would have provided a pathway to legal status for undocumented youth who came to this country as children. None have been adopted by Congress as of 2018.

⁸² DACA (Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals) was signed into law in 2012 by President Obama. DACA grants individuals brought to the US as undocumented children relief from deportation and a two-year work permit. It does not lead to citizenship rights. <https://thehill.com/opinion/immigration/370367-the-difference-between-daca-and-dreamers-a-primer>.

granted about 800,000 undocumented youth the right to stay and work legally in the United States, but not a path to citizenship. DREAMER's today enjoy the broadest support by the American public; 79% of voters agree that the undocumented youth - who came to the USA through no fault of their own, attended US schools, and follow the law - deserve a path to citizenship.⁸³ Yet, Congress has once again failed to address the plight of this population, the TPS population, and that of the other 11 million undocumented workers in the United States.

DREAMERs: Defining a New Narrative for Belonging

As stated by Nichols (2013)⁸⁴ in their quest to demand a legal right to reside in the United States, DREAMERs launched an effort to define themselves as Americans in all their actions, except in their access to legal papers. By elevating their own similar experience as other young people in American schools, they attempted to change the "hearts and minds" of a hostile American public. By organizing "undocumented & proud coming-out" parties, or exposing themselves to their classmates during graduation ceremonies, they courageously and defiantly asserted their own humanity and challenged American society to accept their existence as "undocumented Americans."⁸⁵

⁸³ <https://thehill.com/latino/375677-poll-finds-broad-support-for-path-to-citizenship-for-daca-recipients>

⁸⁴ Nicholls, Walter. The Dreamers: How the Undocumented Youth Movement Transformed the Immigrant Rights Debate. Stanford University Press. 2013. Pg. 119-121

⁸⁵ Nicholls, Walter. The Dreamers: How the Undocumented Youth Movement Transformed the Immigrant Rights Debate. Stanford University Press. 2013. Pg. 118-127

As explained by Jacques Ranciere's,⁸⁶ the DREAMERs were able to successfully make a narrative of "belonging" by seeking political subjectivity on their "in-between status." They called themselves Americans, but Americans who were undocumented by no-fault of their own. During his DACA announcement speech, President Obama reinforced this narrative when he stated that his administration would grant deserving immigrant youth relief from deportation because, for all intent and purposes, those undocumented youth were American:⁸⁷

"I've seen the courage of students who, except for the circumstances of their birth, are as American as Malia or Sasha; students who bravely come out as undocumented in hopes they could make a difference in the country they love."

DREAMERs were able to frame this narrative by successfully driving rights demands within two sets of ideas; (1) their quest of the American Dream via education and abiding by the rules, thereby defining themselves as contributors and not takers to American society; and (2) by adopting the theme of access to civil rights (similar to LGBTs and African American struggles) that demonstrated a knowledge of American traditions, its institutions, and political systems. These two frames allowed them to build alliances across race, class, and sexual differences to push for changes in the American political system that would join them in their demands for permanent rights. Because they were educated in the American educational system, they knew the nuances of the English language and

⁸⁶ Ranciere, Jacques. 2007. "What does it mean to be Un?" *Continuum: Journal of Media and Cultural Studies*. 21 (4); Pgs: 559-569.

⁸⁷ <https://obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/the-press-office/2014/11/20/remarks-president-address-nation-immigration>

could use it to communicate the many ways in which they embraced the “middle-class” attributes of commitment to self-advancement, commitment to country, economic mobility, acculturation, social acceptance from their peers and high levels of human capital accumulation through commitment to higher education goals and work.

Additionally, DREAMERs were successful in their claim of belonging by emphasizing their attributes as worthy members of society with good moral character (largely defined in immigration law by the absence of any kind of criminal convictions) who followed the rules and were deserving of legal access to citizenship. By emphasizing their worthiness and their blamelessness for their illegality, Elizabeth Keyes’ (2013)⁸⁸ argues the DREAMERs shifted the strategy of defining citizenship to a controversial terrain that limits opportunities for those immigrants who are not deemed worthy (i.e. unskilled) and fall within the cracks of the legal system. In defining worthiness, the DREAMERs narrative of belonging emphasized their commitment to self-advancement, patriotism, high moral virtue, and industriousness to advance American ideals.

⁸⁸ Keyes, Elizabeth. “*Defining American: The DREAM Act, Immigration Reform and Citizenship*,” 14 Nevada Law Journal. 101. (2013)

Linda Bosniak⁸⁹ (2000) describes this definition of citizenship as the “psychological dimension of citizenship [which] describes the affective ties of identification and solidarity that [we] maintain with groups of [other] people....” This dimension of belonging, together with a narrative of “good citizenship,” allowed DREAMERS to claim for themselves a psychological membership to American society without the formal legal recognition of the State. By claiming belonging and demonstrating the many ways in which they belonged, the American polity was forced to accept their existence as worthy members of American society. The result is that today the majority of American voters support a path to citizenship for undocumented youth, while still opposing the same for their undocumented parents.

Because of this paradox, despite their successful re-definition of belonging, DREAMER’s still do not have a clear avenue to achieve permanent citizenship rights. The US Congress continues to be at a stalemate on how to deal with the total undocumented population of 11.5 million undocumented workers and their families. Despite their successful transformation of a narrative of belonging, DACA holders have joined TPS holders into a state of legal permanent temporality. Like TPS, DACA is a temporary program that must be renewed every two years at the whim of the Executive Branch and lacks a path to citizenship. Currently, this program is also under threat by President Donald Trump who announced his intent to terminate the program in 2017.⁹⁰

⁸⁹ Bosniak, Linda. “*Citizenship Denationalized*,” 7 Ind. Journal of Global Legal Studies. 447, 479. 2000.

⁹⁰ <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/04/24/us/daca-dreamers-trump.html>

Almost six years after its enactment, DACA holders are still uncertain of their future, and just like TPS holders, continue to live their lives in a constant state of legal uncertainty. Nevertheless, a recent study by the American Immigration Council found that DACA had a positive impact on their personal experiences; they have become more integrated into American economic and social institutions, pursuing higher education and becoming professionals in fields that allow them for faster social mobility.⁹¹

Similar to the enactment of TPS in the early 1990s, however, the enactment of DACA in 2012 managed to positively respond to a demand for inclusion by simultaneously granting exclusion in the form of temporal relief from deportation plus a permit to work legally. In short, both programs granted legal personhood to two separate and distinct communities who were acknowledged to positively contribute to American society but were never allowed to live their lives as full legal human-beings. The impact of both of these temporary programs in the understanding of citizenship as a political construct, has yet to be evaluated by political science scholars today. The meaning of citizenship, who has it and how it is granted, is having a long-lasting impact on societal cohesiveness and threatens the ethos of America as melting-pot where many cultures eventually become one distinctive American identity.

⁹¹ Gonzalez Roberto & Angie Bautista Chavez. *Two Years and Counting: Assessing the Growing Power of DACA*. Special Report. American Immigration Council. June 2014

For purposes of this study, however, the analysis of integration and eventual assimilation outcomes does not include DREAMERs. This research study only measures the integration experience of Central American TPS holders (Salvadorans, Hondurans and Nicaraguans) who have lived in the US under a regime of permanent temporality for more than 20 years.

CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH FRAMEWORK & METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this research project is to understand the dynamics that influence the integration process of immigrants under TPS status and to explore the impact that their in-between status has had on their sense of belonging after almost 20 years in legal limbo.

In order to assess this group's sense of belonging, this study will examine the following three areas that impact their individual sense of inclusion and/or exclusion: (1) their forced transnationalism and emotional trauma resulting from a lack of family reunification rights; (2) their group agency to demand rights through social movement mobilization; and (3) their own subjective interpretation of their identity as "belonging or non-belonging" to American society.

Applying empirical analysis of current political science literature on immigrant integration, plus analysis of twenty-nine (29) field interviews under an ethnographic research design, this study evaluates how TPS holders' integration experience has set the stage for their eventual group assimilation into American society. Since TPS holders' integration process has not been formally facilitated by the US government, this study seeks to identify the actors, internal and external to the community, that have assisted in developing the framework for TPS participation in the American polity.

The Puzzle

Since their numbers are small compared to the total undocumented population, TPS holders as a group are an understudied population. However, given their experiences with limited legality, further examination of the impact of permanent temporality on their own subjective interpretation of integration would shed light on the impact of long-term temporality on the eventual assimilation of immigrants under temporary programs such as TPS and DACA. TPS holders have a legal right to work and reside in their local communities, but they do not have any access to citizenship rights or to the benefits of any other legally authorized worker, such as social security or Medicare benefits upon retirement. Furthermore, after almost 20 years of demonstrated contributions and compliance to American rules and regulations, they do not have a path to transform their long-term investment in the United States into a path to become US citizens.

The formal study of assimilation defines group integration as process by which a given immigrant group gains economic and political power via formal voting rights and their ability to run members of their community for political office. Formal political participation, English acquisition, and acculturation are characteristics often described as positive signs of integration that lead to an eventual positive assimilation outcome (Portes 1996). However, this traditional path of evaluating integration outcomes requires access to citizenship rights, which have been historically

denied to most Central Americans since the 1980s. Despite their long settlement in the US, lack of access to citizenship rights means that this community has been unable to gain formal political influence via voting and electoral participation, hence limiting their ability to influence the political process to demand a legislative solution from Congress for their co-nationals. The challenge for this community is to figure out how to transform their long history of social movement activism for their “right to stay” into a clear demand for the “right to belong” in the polity of the communities in which they have lived and worked for in the last two decades.

Methodology

Applying qualitative methodology research design (e.g. an ethnographic analysis of field interviews plus empirical analysis of existent literature), this study evaluates how TPS holders’ integration experience has set the stage for their eventual group assimilation into American society. The underlying premise of this research project is that assimilation,⁹² or the eventual blending of this group into the American melting pot, is the desirable positive outcome expected of them and their descendants by the dominant native society. The secondary premise of this

⁹² Assimilation is seen in this study as an outcome, not a process by which a minority group adapts to the dominant cultural norms and economic structures, and henceforth sets its descendants for a path to equal parity of opportunity with the native population. There are major disagreements on whether the Eurocentric view of assimilation is applicable to new non-European migrants as many new immigrants have had to rely in the formation of an ethnic identity to survive in a White-European dominated society. Some literature argues that rather than adapting to old norms, newer immigrant groups are demanding the ability to define themselves as Americans on their own terms. Part of their repertoire of rights demands include the acknowledgement of ethnic identity & cultural consistency as a mobilization device for ethnic political activity and social mobility. See Michelle Adams journal article “Radical Integration,” *California Law Review*, March 2006. Vol 94. No.2 Pg. 261-267. Also see Santoro, Wayne A., and Gary M. Segura. “Generational Status and Mexican American Political Participation: The Benefits and Limitations of Assimilation.” *Political Research Quarterly*, vol. 64, no. 1, 2011, pp. 172–184.

research is that TPS holders, themselves, consider assimilation, or the achievement of access to full rights and parity of opportunity with the native population, as the desirable outcome for themselves, their children, and their grandchildren.⁹³

This study seeks to evaluate the experiences of this population in two population hubs: the NJ/NY Metropolitan area and the WDC Metro Area which, together, are the second and third largest urban population hubs for the Central Americans in the United States.

In order to add new knowledge to the evaluation of traditional objective dimensions of assimilation (Portes 1996), this study includes the analysis of a second dimension of assimilation: subjective integration (Chebel d'Appollonia 2015). This second dimension evaluates the individual perception of their own experiences, and if, regardless of their lack of access to citizenship rights, this group of immigrants still holds onto a positive view of their own experience living in the United States. Do they have a sense of exclusion or inclusion as they engage in their daily lives. At which level of engagement do they feel that they belong to

⁹³ Recent literature acknowledges that immigrants have a more positive outlook at the future assimilation prospects for their children because they compare what they have with what they left behind. The challenge for the study of current immigrant's aspirations for their children is to evaluate the prospects for successful assimilation of the first and second generation of ethnic-groups whose expectations for social mobility will likely reflect their interactions with others in the society of their parent's adopted country. See Peter Skerry's article *Do We Really Want Immigrants to Assimilate?*, published on Wed, March 1st, 2000 by the Brookings Institute.

American society. Applying the framework of segmented assimilation (Portes & Zhou 1993), this research will examine whether the experiences of this group have set them up for a sense of alienation that will increase the conditions for voluntary non-incorporation or if their political incorporation via non-traditional mobilization structures has made them feel included and, henceforth, deserving of rights to fully belong in American society.

Given the ongoing debate about how to solve the flow of undocumented workers from the Mexican/Central American region and the current debate on the extension of the temporary protection granted to 800,000 DREAMERs by the Obama Administration, further study of the TPS experience will be useful to inform future policy recommendations on the impact of long-term temporality in the eventual assimilation of immigrants such as DACA holders and TPS holders. It will also provide useful academic research on the immigrant integration experience of those who have the right to work, but not the right to become citizens.

The current literature on the TPS experience has focused on the historical context of this population's arrival and their agency for achieving rights. Other studies have examined the impact of limited resources on their co-ethnic communities that failed to facilitate economic mobility and have explored the experience of survival in places of first arrival like San Francisco and Los Angeles. Given the

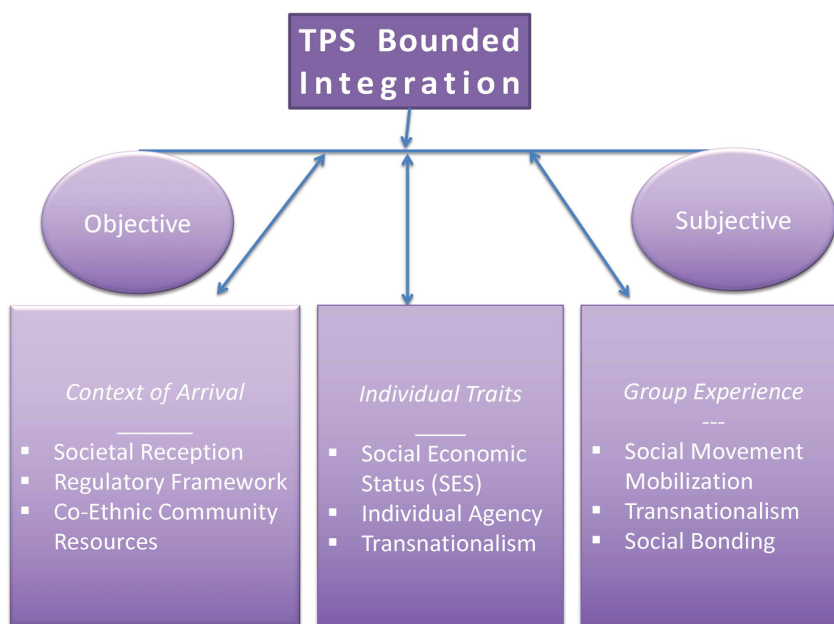
lack of quantitative data specifically focused on immigrants with TPS, very few studies have examined the labor participation experience of those under TPS versus those who are undocumented. Even fewer have tracked this population trajectory in a quantitative manner to measure the group's social economic status (SES) and social mobility.

By attempting to explore the concept of subjective integration as it applies to the TPS experience, this research project will provide useful data to evaluate whether granting a work permit, but not citizenship rights, creates a sense of permanent subjective discrimination that can eventually lead to segmented assimilation and the creation of a second-class citizenry with a sense of belonging that is bounded by possible denial of rights every eighteen months. By using qualitative research methodology, this research project will examine the impact of the following dynamics in the sense of belonging for TPS holders: (1) the historical context of their arrival, (2) the regulatory framework that defines their societal exclusion and/or inclusion, (3) their group agency to demand rights via social movement activism, (4) their transnationalism, and finally (5) their own subjective interpretation on their sense of belonging. In order to understand the impact of all these dynamics on their integration process, Figure 1 below illustrates a theoretical framework for evaluating the integration process for those under TPS.

Bounded Integration: a new conceptual model for TPS integration

Figure One below outlines a new concept of bounded integration which attempts to address the particular experience of having rights within a bounded timeline—every eighteen months, that might not expand depending on the political whims of the polity of the time. This theoretical framework is a modification of several conceptual models of immigrant political integration that take into consideration the context of arrival and societal reception (Portes & Rumbaut 1990), non-traditional forms of immigration political participation through social movement under a framework of inclusion and exclusion (Cook 2013), the responsiveness of the traditional political system to the agency of the immigrant group (Hochschild & Mollenkoph 2009), and the impact of subjective integration as a critical indicator of eventual assimilation (Chebel d’Appollonia 2015). The Bounded Integration model helps describe the complex framework of the TPS integration experience and how the dynamics outlined above come together to influence the integration options and potential outcomes of those under TPS. The conceptual model illustrated in Figure One outlines three areas of the TPS experience within two dimensions of integration that come together to influence the integration outcomes for TPS status holders: an objective and a subjective dimension.

Figure 1: TPS Bounded Integration Model



The TPS Bounded Integration Model encompasses the following three areas:

1. The first area of analysis is an objective dimension that measures the group's integration experience via analysis of their context of arrival. This regulatory legal framework (access to legality) sets the starting point that determines their initial integration choices. Empirical evidence already exists in this area, as extensive study has been conducted on the denial of refugee status for this population in the early 1980s which created an unwelcoming societal dynamic upon arrival (See Chapter One). Other areas of research already in existence include the agency of this population in

achieving limited rights through social movement mobilization and the level of resources their co-ethnic communities possessed to facilitate the group's initial economic survival.

2. The second area of analysis also falls within the objective dimension because it includes the experience of the individual upon arrival. It evaluates personal factors such as human capital (educational level), individual agency for advancement, access to resources through familial bonds, level of English language acquisition, and the ability to create group bonding through engagement in their local community regimes of inclusion or social activism to achieve rights. Additionally, this dimension includes analysis on the economic and emotional impact that transnationalism, forced family separation via lack of family reunification rights, has had on this group's ability to develop a sense of belonging to their communities where they live and work (Menjivar 2017).
3. The third area of analysis, and the focus of this research, falls within a subjective dimension of integration. Through the research instrument, this project will attempt to measure whether this population already has a sense of "belonging" in American society. The evaluation includes forms of participation in unconventional political mobilization through social-movement organizing and their demands for citizenship rights, both nationally and locally. It will attempt to measure whether their self-identification of

belonging or non-belonging impacts the group consciousness of loyalty to the norms and values of the society in which they reside. It will also attempt to identify whether individual perceptions of discrimination have already created instances of voluntary non-integration and apathy for individuals and for the group.

As stated earlier, one of the main premises of this research study is that TPS holders consider their own assimilation a desirable outcome of their integration experience in the United States. In order to confirm this assumption, it is important to explore the different facets in which this population has experienced exclusion or inclusion. The evaluation of such experience will help determine whether a sense of “belonging” to American society is indeed their eventual desired outcome for themselves and their children.

Key Research Questions

Given the dynamics explained above, this research proposal will evaluate the impact that TPS status has on the integration experience of members of this group. Since Central American TPS holders live in a gray-zone of legality, with a right to work but without access to permanent citizenship rights, this study will evaluate this group sense of belonging to American society by exploring four key research questions:

Question 1: *What are the measurements of integration that more closely apply to this population in the evaluation of their integration experience?*

Given the context of their arrival and their experience in long-term temporality under a regime of exclusion (i.e. lack-of-access to formal citizenship rights), it is important to evaluate whether traditional measures of integration for immigrants are the most appropriate to evaluate this population's integration experience. One of the main arguments for TPS is that it this legal status provides a higher level of security for this immigrant population because this status removes the insecurity of deportation. Holding a work-permit then, should facilitate the movement of the TPS population into better socio-economic status that affords them a better opportunity for social mobility. Given that TPS holders reside in hubs similar to those of other undocumented Central Americans, is holding of a work-permit a more accurate determinant of better SES? Does their current SES demonstrate a positive trend towards better economic outcomes that would facilitate eventual assimilation for their descendants? Immigrants with limited citizenship rights experience exclusion in different facets of their lives. In order to understand this population's eventual assimilation outcome, it will be important to identify the specific areas in which they experience daily exclusion, as well as understand the areas in which they already feel included.

Question 2: *Who are the actors doing the job of integration for the TPS refugee population?*

Central American refugees who were granted TPS did not qualify for any formal government assistance programs granted under the United States refugee program. Because the United States lacks a formal process of incorporation for non-political refugees, most immigrants in the US have historically depended on their co-nationals for resettlement and assistance in navigating life upon arrival. As demonstrated in the current literature findings, and like many other immigrants before them, Central Americans relied heavily on the limited economic resources of social enclaves created by earlier co-nationals who informally supported their initial resettlement. Through social movement mobilization, earlier leaders of this population organized networks of allies to push local elected officials and traditional immigrant rights advocates to support asylum rights claims on behalf of the Central American population in the early 1980s. This research question seeks to explore how, after more than 30 years, that initial role to obtain asylum rights has transformed itself into a role to sustain this group's continued fight for the right to stay and belong to American society.

Question 3: *Has the transnationalism of TPS holders slowed down or impeded their integration process and eventual assimilation?*

Given the fact that TPS holders do not have a right to family reunification and are not allowed to travel freely to visit relatives, their existence in the United States

has been marked by high levels of transnationalism and emotional trauma. Despite many years of forced family separation, this community has been able to maintain familial bonds via long distance communication and remittances to economically sustain the families left behind. Given their forced transnationalism, it is important to explore whether they have been able to develop economic roots in the United States that support their integration into American society, or if their long-term family separation has led to the creation of permanent transnational communities that are resource-poor and have not been able to invest in their own futures. Following up on Joppke, Christian & Morawska's (2005 & 2003) work on transnationalism and integration, this research will seek to understand if their current level of forced transnationalism has served as a deterrent for their integration.

Question 4: What is the subjective interpretation of their own integration?

Objective interpretations of incorporation and assimilation focus on the measurable metrics of advancement via group and individual SES. However, this research project seeks to shed light on TPS holders' subjective evaluation of their own integration process. Do TPS holders feel that they have more rights than the undocumented? Have two decades of limited legality resulted in a sense of inclusion or exclusion in their local communities? Given their long existence in limited legality, in what areas of this everyday experience do they feel a sense of belonging to American society? The study of their subjective integration seeks to

evaluate whether this population has a positive or negative view of their own integration experience. It is also important to examine whether any segments of this group have already engaged in what Chebel d'Appollonia identifies as "voluntary immigrant non-incorporation," leading to the formation of ethnic communities that experience segmented assimilation. Hence, this research proposal will seek to evaluate TPS holders' perception of their own integration and whether, despite their lack of access to citizenship rights, they still perceive themselves as belonging to American society and maintain a positive view of their own integration.

Taken in their totality, the answers to these four questions will outline a clear assessment of the positive or negative impact of TPS status on the integration process of this small but significant group of immigrants. In attempting to understand their integration experiences in the four areas identified above, this research proposal yields important data on integration outcomes that could be used to examine the potential impact of any future policy proposals on temporary immigrant arrangements in the US. At the time this proposal was written, the US polity is still debating how to regulate the undocumented population and what type of rights, if any, to grant them. Any future debate on temporary-work-permit arrangements for the undocumented, or for any future workers from the region, would benefit from an in-depth analysis of the societal consequences of granting people limited rights to work and live, but no rights to fully engage in society as citizens.

Purpose of this Study

Current studies of this population focus mostly on their context of arrival and their group agency to achieve rights, but they do not focus on the group's experience of their own sense of belonging. As such, the purpose of this study is to understand the dynamics that influence the integration process of TPS holders into American society and to explore the impact that their in-between status has had on their own sense of belonging. The specific new area of knowledge to be explored by this study is this group's own sense of belonging to American society after more than twenty years of permanent temporality and limited rights.

Research Design

This section describes the research design used to seek answers to the research questions outlined at the beginning of this chapter. It uses qualitative research methodology (e.g. ethnographic analysis) to gather data on the population in two distinct population hubs: NY/NJ and WDC metro area. The two hubs were selected because the population of Central Americans with TPS have a large presence in these two urban areas and compose the 2nd and 3rd largest hubs in the USA for this community. The field research was conducted under Rutgers University Institutional Review Approval for Arts & Sciences (Protocol 201-7000-1492) initially approved on November 28th, 2017.

The process of data collection involved interviews, observations, and analysis of the data to translate the information into a thematic thread of this group's experience. The information was gathered by conducting an IRB-approved, voluntary, non-compensated interview that lasted between 30-45 minutes with current TPS holders. Recommendations of TPS holders for the interviews were received from leaders of local community organizations that service this population in both targeted areas. Chain-sampling model and individual recruitment based on recommendations were used to expand on the initial subjects for the interview, finally leading to a significant sample (29 interviews) that are representative in gender and nationality of the current population of Central Americans under TPS protection. Interviews were conducted in Spanish by the study's PI, and later transcribed into English by a certified bilingual transcription service. All volunteers were asked to give verbal consent prior to recording, as outlined on the IRB approved protocol. See APPENDIX 4 for consent and disclaimer materials. The data was gathered during field-research period that lasted seven months - from September 2017 until April 2018.

Data Gathering: New York/New Jersey Region

In order to have access to participants for the interviews, the PI contacted leaders of local community organizations that provide legal services to members of

this community in New Jersey and New York (See APPENDIX 6). PI also met with the Consulate Offices of El Salvador (both in NJ and WDC) to engage their support in recruiting subjects during their walk-in working office hours for TPS renewal. The goal of initial meeting with community leaders was to explain the purpose of the study and to request permission to attend their meetings and recruit volunteers willing to participate in the study. Upon the recommendation of these community leaders, beginning in the Fall of 2017, the PI began to attend monthly community gatherings held in four different cities in New Jersey: Newark, Union City, Elizabeth, Morristown, and Red Bank. At the initial meeting, the PI was introduced as a Rutgers University student doing research on TPS and as a volunteer for the campaign to renew the TPS designation of current TPS holders. As recommended by the local leaders, volunteering was meant to help develop a sense of trust between the PI and the TPS holders, as they are often unwilling to talk to strangers about their status. In November of 2017, the administration of President Trump finally announced his administration's decision to terminate TPS for immigrants from Haiti.⁹⁴ Shortly after, similar decisions were announced for TPS holders for Honduras, Nicaragua and El Salvador.

After IRB approval was given on Nov 2017, the PI posted announcements at the offices of the local community organizations and simultaneously requested

⁹⁴ *Trump Administration to End TPS for 60,000 Haitians*. https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/national-security/trump-administration-to-end-provisional-residency-protection-for-50000-haitians/2017/11/20/fa3fdd86-ce4a-11e7-9d3a-bcbe2af58c3a_story.html?noredirect=on&utm_term=.341c477fac65

volunteers to participate in the study at different community events and at the Salvadoran Consulate in Elizabeth, NJ. At each community meeting - and at the walk-in office hours of the Consulate - only a handful of people volunteered for the interviews, and many of them proved difficult to pin down for an interview. After several failed attempts at randomly recruiting during meetings, the PI changed recruitment strategy and asked leaders of the local organizations for help identifying and recommending folks to speak to during their office hours or during the community meetings. Through this referral system, 44 TPS holders signed up for the interviews; of those, 18 finally participated in the study for the NJ/NY area. Volunteers from the Long Island and White Plains area in NY State were extremely difficult to confirm for interviews and were finally not included in the total interviews in the region. Nevertheless, the interview participants were diverse in gender, age, and country of origin in a proportion similar to their population make-up in the region. Interviews were conducted at the offices of the local community organizations. Initially, PI attempted to make individual appointments during the week, but after experiencing a large number of cancellations and no-shows, a decision was made to hold office hours on weekends before or after their individual legal appointments or before or after a community meeting. This change in strategy was more effective in completing interviews as the subjects were already at the facilities and were willing to accommodate requests to spend extra time with PI to do the interview.

Data Gathering: Washington DC Metro Region

The process of identifying volunteers for subjects to interview in the DC Metro Region began in with an initial trip to the Washington DC to participate in the national conference of the National TPS Alliance held on October 15th, 2017. At the Conference, the PI reconnected with Central American leaders from the DC Metro area, introduced her research project, and asked for their support with identifying volunteers. The PI returned to DC for a second set of one-on-one meetings with those leaders, including the Consulate of El Salvador in Silver Spring, MD, on January 31, 2018 to firm up support from interview subjects. Based on the PI's experience recruiting volunteers in NY/NJ, the PI requested meeting space at the local organizations offices to facilitate the interview process, and arrangements were made to attend 2 scheduled community meetings. On the day of each of the community gatherings, the PI was introduced by the local leaders as a student and volunteer, and the PI gave a presentation of study to the TPS group in attendance. About 21 TPS holders volunteered for the study in Washington DC. The PI followed up with all those who volunteered and despite numerous attempts at scheduling the interviews, only 11 interviews were eventually completed by the end of the field research period. This pattern of ambivalence about giving an interview outside of a familiar setting, not returning scheduling calls about the interview, or cancelling interviews at the last minute was similar to that observed by the PI during the same process in the NJ area.

The dates for the two DC Metro Area meetings attended by PI were as follows:

1. CARECEN-DC TPS Re-Registration Workshop, Washington DC: February 24th, 2018 at a construction job site of the company Clark Construction.
2. TPS Alliance Community Meeting at Salvadoran Consulate Offices, Silver Spring, MD: March 17th, 2018

Key Observations During Field Research

The process of scheduling the interviews revealed an important data point about this population. Per observations of the PI, many of the initial scheduled interviews were often re-scheduled, and sometimes cancelled at the last minute. In many instances, the participants would have last minute changes in their work schedules and would call to cancel or would just not show up at all. In one instance, after repeated cancellations - and in an attempt to secure a new appointment time - a TPS holder stated to the PI:

“I don’t like making appointments because I never know what I am going to be doing day by day. I might be working or I might not, and since my TPS might expire soon, I need to work as many hours as they call me for. If I am not working tomorrow, I will call you.” (PI Field Notes for Sat Feb 24th, 2018)

The experience of repeated last-minute cancellations or no-shows revealed a pattern of uncertainty in TPS holders' daily lives; the precariousness of their work impacts their day-to-day decisions, as they have to organize their non-work commitments around their ability to get work hours. In order to respond to this issue, the PI began holding fixed office hours at the offices of community organizations. Those office hours were scheduled at the time of walk-in legal consultations or at the time of scheduled community meetings for TPS re-registration or TPS campaign. Most community meetings, both in DC and NY/NJ regions were held on weekends. In total, 18 interviews were conducted in NY/NJ and 11 were conducted in the DC Metro Area, for a total of 29 personal interviews. The subjects were representative of the gender and country of origin make-up of the overall Central American TPS community in both regions, and their response types reached the point of saturation. Table 10 below illustrates the demographic breakdown and regions of the 29 subjects who agreed to be interviewed for this study.

Table 10: Participant Demographics

Location	Salvadorans	Hondurans	Nicaraguans	Male	Female	Total
NY/NJ	11	7	0	5	13	18
WDC Metro	11	0	1	9	2	11
Total Interviews in this Study	22	7	1	14	15	29
* % of this pop on TPS	75%	21%	1%			97%
* % of this pop interviewed for study	75%	24%	1%	49%	51%	100%

During the course of the field research, the PI attended events organized by the local TPS committees both in NJ and in DC. However, in New Jersey, the PI became a volunteer organizer for trainings on the US Legislative process so TPS holders could gain skills for their future lobbying visits to members of Congress. The trainings were organized by their local community organizations and were encouraged as part of their local TPS Advocacy Committees. Since the study's goal was to develop a deep understanding of factors that determine this population's sense of belonging, it was important to develop a sense of trust between the community and the PI so that they would feel comfortable sharing their personal stories and experiences during the interview. One subject expressed the following sentiment at the end of her interview:

“Al principio tenia miedo de hablar con usted. Pero me senti en confianza y no me dio ninguna pena contarle todas mis cosas.” [Initially I was afraid to talk to you. But after a while I felt comfortable. I was not embarrassed or scared to talk about my life with you.] (PI Field Notes for Wed Feb 28th)

While the PI's presence at their community events had an impact on building trust, the biggest factor became the support of the study by the community leaders who would validate the PI's presence by expressing the importance of this type of research in furthering the credibility of their community's claim to permanence. This validation was important for recruiting volunteers and getting them to agree to participate in the study. Additionally, conducting the interviews at the

offices of the local organizations gave the participants a sense of ease, as they were in a place where they felt safe to speak about themselves. An important - but not a determinant - factor in building trust was the common ancestry of the PI with the group; the PI is an immigrant from El Salvador who was familiar with their culture and easily took part in their celebrations around music, food, and family. This allowed for what Wolcott (2010)⁹⁵ identified as reflexivity, or the process by which researchers “position themselves” by revealing their background (i.e. work experiences, cultural connections and history) to make connections. As Walcott (2010) states:

“...Our readers have a right to know about us....They want to know what prompts our interest in the topics we investigate, to whom we are reporting, and what we personally stand to gain from our study.”

While Walcott’s quote explains that reflexivity matters when reporting on the data, in the case of this study, this ability to make a direct connection to the subject matter between PI and subjects was an important, but not a determinant, factor in building trust. There was a level of commonality that allowed subjects to feel comfortable sharing their experiences. Furthermore, this reflexivity becomes key in the process of ascribing meaning to the data, as the PI’s cultural familiarity with the language and expressions provided a layer of nuance to decoded meaning. Field notes taken during the interviews focused on capturing this process of

⁹⁵ Wolcott, H. F. Ethnography Lessons: A Primer. Walnut Creek, CA. Left Coast Press. 2010

reflexivity, recording specific moments that stood out for emotional connection to the PI's personal feelings and experience.

Chain sampling model and individual recruitment based on recommendations by community leaders was purposeful. The interview protocol focused on specific dynamics of the individual personal experiences. Hence, identifying subjects willing to speak for 30-45 minutes about their lives required a sense of trust in not just in the process (the study), but the organization and the leaders who endorsed the study and the researcher. Once the subject understood the purpose of the study and trusted it was coming from someone the organization felt was credible, they were more likely to agree to an interview. The overall sample size was chosen strategically, as well. It was diverse enough to draw comparisons between cases, and significant enough to meet the saturation point that would allow the study to reach meaningful conclusions.

In an attempt to understand and explain the factors that shape each individual TPS holder's experience, the study applies a qualitative research paradigm. As explained by Creswell (2013),⁹⁶ "Qualitative research flows from theoretical frameworks and assumptions, to form an interpretive lens that is both inductive and deductive and allows the researcher to establish patterns or themes that

⁹⁶ Creswell, John W. *Qualitative Inquiry & Research Design: Choosing Among Five Approaches*. 3rd Edition. Sage Publications Inc. 2013 Pg. 44-50

help decipher “the meaning individuals or groups ascribe to a social or human problem.”

In conclusion, qualitative research is an investigative process that is helpful in understanding a particular social phenomenon and the meaning individuals give to it in their everyday lives. The research process occurred in its natural setting, or at the site where the subjects felt more comfortable having face-to-face interactions. The interview protocol was designed to get a sense of the subject’s personal experience, but the questions were open ended to allow for differences to be captured among each subject’s interpretations and for a natural flow of information-gathering via conversation. Once data was gathered, a process of building categories began by organizing data into themes and putting them together to assemble global concepts that could help develop of a new framework of analysis for evaluating TPS holders’ sense of their own integration experience.

Contributions and Limitations of the Study

Research findings on the TPS experience will be useful in informing future policy recommendations on the impact of temporality on those who have the right to work but not the right to settle in the societies that use their labor without reciprocating with access to citizenship rights as determined by the state. Given the current policy debate on immigration reform, academic research in this area of

integration policy would be useful for evaluating the impact of limited rights on achieving group bonding, societal cohesiveness, and eventual assimilation of all newcomers into one ethos of an American identity.

The limitations of the study are inherent in the nature of qualitative research - the ability to extrapolate the results was limited by the number of responses to the research tool and to the place and location of the study. However, qualitative findings are useful in providing a picture of the group's sense of belonging in a pre-determined location of settlement and time. It will also provide a road map for future research on the subject of non-European ethnic migration to the United States.

Research findings could be used to inform the policy decision-making process for developing a legal solution to the status of this group of immigrants who, after more than 20 years in temporal-legality, continue to demand a permanent solution to their existence as workers in the United States. It also seeks to inform policy makers on the impact of temporary visa-work arrangements on the formation of one distinct American identity for all new comers.

The lack of access to citizenship rights for many immigrants in American society today threatens the ideal outcome of an eventual melting pot in which people from many places become part of one American identity as described under the concept of “e pluribus unum.”⁹⁷ This study hopes to contribute to the evolving academic study of integration and assimilation of non-European immigrants as they continue to arrive at the borders of Southern Mexico, northern Canada, and at any point-of-entry into the United States of America.

⁹⁷ *E pluribus unum* --out of many, one

CHAPTER FOUR: LITERATURE REVIEW

According to modern political science theory, any understanding of citizenship rights for immigrants must be connected to the role the state plays in granting or denying access to rights to belong to a given society. Despite acknowledgement that the idea of citizenship is always a contested one, different theoretical frameworks reaffirm the notion that in liberal societies, the state has the ultimate responsibility of defining access formal access to citizenship rights.

The study of the push-and-pull factors of labor migration and its social networks is not new and has been part of the study of immigration and integration in the US. The arrival of one group creates a “pull factor” of new migrants, and the older group provides a support network for the newer arrivals. However, the legal framework of the context of arrival determines the level of opportunity that group has to begin its process of integration. A favorable reception facilitates job opportunities that lead to better socio-economic outcomes for an entire group. For Salvadorans, Hondurans, and Guatemalans, unfriendly immigration laws imposed by the state upon arrival constrained their interactions with the society around them that limited their economic and social mobility opportunities. Therefore, for the purpose of the study of integration and assimilation of Central Americans, it is important to analyze how this group fared in its ability to create a contested notion of “rights” that pushed the state to acknowledge a limited legal existence in US society.

The literature reviewed in this chapter provides a theoretical framework for the empirical analysis of the specific experiences of this group of Central Americans with living with TPS. By reviewing the existent literature on assimilation and integration regimes, and by including a social movement theoretical lens to the group's efforts to scale up contention for rights, this chapter sets the foundation for analysis of the data gathered during field research so that the conclusions clearly address the inquiry of the group's experience as outlined in the four research questions in Chapter Six.

Citizenship and the State

Given the reality of an interconnected world-order driven by economic globalization, increased levels of global migration have forced the emergence of theoretical debates on the contested meaning of citizenship and the role of states in defining access to rights. Liberal definition of a democratic state requires that free and equal citizens agree to a set of rules enforced by the state. In order for the state to function, though, there need to be clear rules as to who belongs and who doesn't, who is the insider and who is isn't. In traditional liberal theory, the dominant realist political point of view as defined by Walzer⁹⁸ determines that the state has a duty to control its territorial border and to define who is a member of their political community. In this definition, the states arbitrates who has access to

⁹⁸ Walzer, Michael. "*The Distribution of Membership*." P.G. Brown and H. Shue (eds), Boundaries: National Autonomy and its Limits. Rowan and Littlefield, Totowa, NJ. 1981.

rights and goods of the nation and who enters and exits as part of that national community. As Walzer argues, “The community itself is a good—conceivable the most important good—that gets distributed.”⁹⁹ The paradox existent within this definition of community within liberal theory is that all those within the community have “moral equality,” yet the limitations the society places on those who have access to its community contradict its main principle of equality. Nevertheless, Walzer argued, the meaning of community can be expanded as long as there is a shared agreement that allows its members to determine future access to membership with policies of exclusion and inclusion. Hence, even within defined nation’s states, there is room for new members to have membership as long as they demonstrate their willingness to blend into the shared identity of the community.

Under a liberal theoretical framework, the definition of a “shared identity” of what makes an immigrant belong or not belong matters because it defines political openings that allow for new entrants into the polity. As such, the contention happens when immigrants begin a process of demands to access permanent rights of belonging. Their success or failure depends on their ability to prove compliance with the society’s norms and values as community. As argued by Sassen,¹⁰⁰ “citizenship occurs in part from the practices of those who are excluded

⁹⁹ Cole, Phillip. *Philosophies of Exclusion: Liberal Political Theory and Immigration*. Edinburgh University Press Ltd. 2000. Pg. 4-5

¹⁰⁰ Sassen, S. *Territory, authority, rights: From medieval to global assemblages*. Cambridge University Press. 2006.

from it.” In this sense, citizenship is “both exclusionary and aspirational, the object of desire and the product of dispute, as well as a dispute in itself...citizenship is defined at its margins, by those claiming their rights, demanding inclusion and the right to participate in the very definition of such rights.”

In the study of contention for the rights to belong, this research study focuses on the experience of the Central American TPS community. Using social movement mobilization strategies, this community has demanded that traditional political opportunities structures (POS) create openings of inclusion that facilitate their everyday experience.¹⁰¹ States like CA, NY, NJ, and the District of Columbia have enacted their own regimes of inclusion designed to assist those immigrants in their communities. Those regimes of inclusion include the enactment of local policies such as in-state tuition and financial aid for unauthorized youth, access to driver's licenses, access to local identification IDs, access to professional licenses to undocumented professionals, non-cooperation orders for local policy with federal immigration enforcement (ICE), statewide bans on local landlord ordinances, and local prohibitions on employment verification.¹⁰² These local policies provide a bundle of rights to immigrants that push toward a new conception of de-facto local citizenship for irregular immigrants that operate in parallel with the denial of formal citizenship rights granted by the national government.¹⁰³ So

¹⁰¹ Pero, Davide and John Solomos. *Migrant Politics and Mobilization: Exclusion, Engagements, Incorporation*. Ethnic & Radical Studies. Vol. 33 No. 1 January 2010. Pg. 1-18

¹⁰² Ramakrishnan Karthick S. “*The California Package of Immigrant Integration and the Evolving Nature of State Citizenship*.” School of Public Policy, UCR. *Policy Matters*. Volume 6, Issue 3, 2015.

¹⁰³ Markowitz, Peter L. “*Undocumented No More; The Power of State Citizenship*.” V. 67. 869. Stanford Legal Review. 2015

while the US Congress has yet to resolve the issue of legal rights for undocumented immigrants, many states and localities have already responded to the “localized contention” by granting localized equality of rights to immigrants living in their local communities. The same is true at the opposite end of the spectrum; some local communities create regimes of exclusion meant to reinforce the state’s exclusionary national leanings.¹⁰⁴ By creating local regimes of inclusion or exclusion, these actors expand and/or contract the outer boundaries of who belonging and re-orient the conversation towards a national dialogue of who has the right to belong in the larger society at large.

While some local governments promote local integration regimes, others promote exclusion. Therefore, it is important to understand that the meaning of citizenship in the context of a liberal state is the product of “social, cultural, political and institutional conflict and struggles”¹⁰⁵ that happen at the local level and eventually get elevated to the national stage via social movement mobilization of immigrant communities who make a rightful claim to rights. The ability of immigrant communities to use these local struggles to create regimes of inclusion are but one way to demonstrate their sense of belonging to local communities which, in the aggregate, add up to a sense of belonging to the entire society. For Central American TPS holders, the more than 20 years of mobilization for rights to stay in the US

¹⁰⁴ Robin Dale Jacobson, et al. “The Southwest’s Uneven Welcome: Immigrant Inclusion and Exclusion in Arizona and New Mexico.” *Journal of American Ethnic History*, vol. 37, no. 3, 2018, pp. 5–36. *JSTOR*, www.jstor.org/stable/10.5406/jamerethnhist.37.3.0005.

¹⁰⁵ Clarke, John. Kathleen Coll, Evalina Dagnino and Catherine Neveu. *Disputing Citizenship*. Policy Press. University of Bristol. Great Britain. 2014 Pg. 49

serve as an example of their commitment and contribution to the society in which they have lived in and worked for the majority of their adult life. Integration outcomes depend on the level of rights this community achieves as they settle into local communities and begin a process of economic mobility, social contention, acceptance, and eventually access to citizenship rights for themselves and their descendants.

Access to Economic Mobility Rights

Since its inception, TPS granted economic rights to those under the program by giving them a temporary but legal right to and removing the insecurity of deportation. Even for the undocumented, however, there exists an implicit practice that grants immigrant workers “territorial personhood” when it grants them protections on basic worker rights under US labor law.¹⁰⁶ Based on cosmopolitan theory, some scholars have argued that an implicit contract exists between migrant workers and the State because access to basic labor rights acknowledges their humanity and existence as economic actors.¹⁰⁷ Illegal immigrants, therefore, constantly straddle between two legal realities: (1) immigrant laws exclude them from the right to permanently reside in the USA, yet (2) labor law provides them with legal personhood to demand a minimum level of economic rights and human protections. In contrast to undocumented immigrants, TPS holders also receive

¹⁰⁶ Kubrin, Charis E, Zatz Marjorie S and Martinez Ramiro, Jr. Punishing Immigrants. New York University Press. 2010. Pages 120-122

¹⁰⁷ Seglow, Jonathan. “The Ethics of Migration.” *Political Studies Review*: 2005 Vol.3 Pg. 317-334

an expanded form of “legal personhood” because the status allows them to work legally, removes the fear of deportation from their everyday experience, and gives them a legal identity to obtain driving privileges that facilitate their mobility. TPS holders reside in their local communities legally and participate in society as long as they behave and keep their standing as good moral citizens.

TPS provides a legal opportunity to engage in legal employment, thereby increasing the employment options and earnings capacity of those under the program. A recent study conducted by the Federal Reserve Bank of Dallas and the Institute for the Study of Labor explored the impact that TPS had on recipients’ labor market outcomes.¹⁰⁸ It examined whether granting workers TPS increased employment opportunities by giving them access to higher paying jobs or expanding their employment options. The study focuses on migrants from El Salvador, by far the largest recipients of TPS, and compares them to the outcomes of undocumented Mexicans. Data was gathered from the 2005 and 2006 American Community Survey. The conclusions of the study are as follows:

“Having legal status...appears to allow more educated immigrants of both sexes and less educated male immigrants to move into better jobs. Less educated women, meanwhile, dramatically increase their labor force participation....less educated men however...become more selective about the jobs they will take, increasing the time they spend searching for jobs

¹⁰⁸ Orrenious Pia M and Madeline Zavodny. “The Impact of Temporary Protective Status on Immigrant Labor Market Outcomes.” The IZA Research Network. Discussion Paper No. 8744 Dec 2014. <http://ftp.iza.org/dp8744.pdf>

and hence boosting their unemployment...Taken as a whole, the results indicate that having even a temporary work permit improves migrant's labor market opportunities."

The results of the study above are consistent with other more recent research conducted by Cecilia Menjivar in 2000 and in 2017. In her study of Salvadorans in San Francisco in 2000, Menjivar¹⁰⁹ observed that holding TPS status does make a difference in the type of jobs men have access by specifically increasing their earning capacity within the low skill labor markets available in the localities where they reside. Their labor participation, however, does not change as they are already fully employed. Women, on the other hand, do see a sharp increase in their economic activity after receiving TPS as they are able to expand their networks of opportunity to find stable employment.

The difference in impact between women and men, she explains, has more to do with the "economic vulnerability of men than with increased economic potential of women." She further theorizes that men do expand their earning capacity with TPS because they are able to negotiate better wages, but since they are already fully employed within low wage labor markets, they are not able to expand their ability to find more stable jobs within the same low wage market. These same

¹⁰⁹ Menjiva, Cecilia. Fragmented Ties: Salvadoran Immigrant Networks in America. University of California Press Ltd. Berkeley and Los Angeles, California. 2000. Page 171

findings are confirmed in Menjivar's more recent study in 2017 which concludes that there is only a marginal difference in earnings between the undocumented and TPS holders, and that the main benefit of the status is the removal of the fear of deportation and the granting of a driver's license which facilitates their mobility and their ability to prove identity and belonging. Further research into the different impact of TPS among men and women is needed in order to corroborate further economic impact by gender and status.

Access to Citizenship Rights

One of the hallmarks of the American ethos as a nation of immigrants has been the centrality of eventual access to citizenship rights for every wave of immigrants since the 19th century. That, coupled with the notion of *jus soli* for the descendants of immigrants, has allowed for the eventual assimilation, albeit not equal opportunity, of different waves of immigrants to integrate and become Americans. As explained by Martin Heisler, citizenship is a critical concept in the assurance or denial of rights, economic benefits, social services, education, due process of law, and opportunities that facilitate the integration of newcomers.¹¹⁰ TPS holders lack citizenship rights because the State acted to only grant them permission to work legally under a framework of limited legality what while denying their rightful claim to refugee status also acknowledged their presence as deserving of some protection. Unlike the undocumented, TPS limited legality also

¹¹⁰ Heisler, Martin. "Introduction—Changing Citizenship Theory and Practice: Comparative Perspectives in a Democratic Framework." *PSOnline*. www.opsanet.org. Pg. 667

grants them a level of inclusion by the state just above those granted to the undocumented by local regimes of inclusion.

As explained by Cook,¹¹¹ incorporation in a regime of citizenship rights implies “the existence of stable and sustainable processes for immigrants’ involvement or engagement.” Because undocumented immigrants, who are subject to deportability, do not have a stable process for integration, Cook offers a model of inclusion/exclusion to analyze different integration paradigms for the undocumented and those with temporary or conditional legal statuses. The model applies to TPS holders who, while not deportable, are in a constant state of uncertainty given their work permit expires every 18 months and its renewal is dependent upon the political whims of the US government. Just like the undocumented, TPS holders are not afforded a stable process of inclusion because they are not assured an eventual path to citizenship. Therefore, Cook’s model of inclusion/exclusion is valuable because it reveals a more expansive view of their integration trajectory. The model takes into consideration their experiences with local institutions, the workplace, and the polity via their engagement in advocacy organizations, unions, and churches that provide them an identity as political actors.

¹¹¹ Cook, Maria Lorena. “*Is Incorporation of Unauthorized immigrants possible?*” (pp.43-64) in J. Hochschild J. Chattopadhyay, C. Gay and M. Jones-Correa, *Outsiders no More? Models of Political Incorporation*. Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press. 2013

State Power and Exclusionary Regimes

Miranda Cady-Hallet¹¹² examined the dynamics of state power in managing and controlling immigrants with temporary status. In her study, she cataloged the experiences of Salvadoran migrants in rural Arkansas in the early 2000s. In her findings, she identified three basic contradictions that shape the experiences of immigrant workers under the TPS:

- (1) The framing of TPS Program as a humanitarian program: although the initial program came about as the result of mobilization and activism by Salvadorans refugees and entailed the state's partial recognition of the disastrous US foreign policy in El Salvador, the twenty-first century manifestation of TPS ...has a distinct framing as a humanitarian-aid project. By erasing the agency of this group in obtaining legal protections by challenging the US government discriminatory actions against them, it absolves the US government from any responsibility to find a permanent solution to the groups' current reality.
- (2) ...TPS simultaneously fosters inclusion and exclusion. While providing migrants with legal papers in the form of a work permit, migrants under TPS are formally defined as non-migrants and their rights circumscribed with every renewal deadline. Additionally, since they are under the control of the state and their files and records updated every 18th months, that same information that grants them protection can be used by the state to eventually deport them upon termination of the program.

¹¹² Cady-Hallet, Miranda. "Temporary Protection, Enduring Contradiction: The Contested and Contradictory Meanings of Temporary Immigration Status." *Law and Social Inquiry*. Volume 39, Issue 3, 621-642. Summer 2014

- (3) ...TPS enables the state to reconcile contradictory tensions... Simultaneously responding to labor market demands through the partial inclusion of temporary workers and responding to nativist anxieties over political and cultural sovereignty...

The contradictions of the TPS program described above allowed the US government - since the beginning of the Central American migration - the ability to manage human flows from the region by creating structures that gave the illusion of responsiveness to human agency for rights while at the same time creating permanent regimes of exclusion. Cadet-Hallet argues that the TPS program is part of a structural form of state exclusion designed to manage and discipline migrant workers in a manner similar to that of the Bracero Program of the 1940s-60s. In her finding, she argues that the TPS created a “semi-permanent underclass of disciplined temporary workers, their personhood constrained by a permanent liminal legality” that controls their movement, their social mobility, and their ability to impact political outcomes for their descendants. TPS allows the nation state to pursue contradictory policies that allow entrance of legal immigrant workers into the US economy while simultaneously defining permanent exclusion by limiting their eventual permanent settlement.

In order to provide a systematic process by which to analyze the impact of this level of exclusion on the lives of migrants with temporary status, Leisi Abrego

and Sarah Lakhani¹¹³ focused on the experiences of immigrants who had been granted humanitarian relief, including U Visa holders, VAWA beneficiaries, and TPS recipients. Using a legal analysis framework, these researchers concluded that those who are under any of these programs, while legally present in the United States, still remain “vulnerable to block mobility, persistent fear of deportation, and instability, confusion and self-blame.” Their analysis revealed that “one of the most difficult aspects of being in temporary, humanitarian status for immigrants is the challenge of signaling to others that they are wholly legal even if they command circumscribed rights, benefits and protections.” For TPS holders, the constant expiration of their work permits limits their ability to change jobs, get promotions, and even pursue education to improve their social capital. This leads to blocked economic and social mobility that narrows their choices for future social integration. TPS holders are also not eligible for any form of social benefits (neither healthcare nor housing benefits) and suffer as many social economic limitations as those in illegal status. They live in a constant state of marginal membership to US society and are subject to structural and symbolic violence.

The Effect of Legal Status on People

As noted by Menjivar¹¹⁴ in her article “Liminal Legality: Salvadoran and Guatemalan Immigrants’ Lives in the United States,” further study into the experiences of

¹¹³ Abrego Leisy J and Sarah M Lahani. “*Incomplete Inclusion: Legal Violence and Immigrants in Liminal Legal Statuses.*” Law & Policy Journal. Vol. 37, No. 4, October 2015 The University of Denver.

¹¹⁴ Menjivar, Cecilia. “*Liminal Legality: Salvadoran and Guatemalan Immigrants’ Lives in the United States.*” AJS Volume 111 Number 4 (January 2006) University of Chicago. Pg. 1003

immigrants who live in the “gray area between legality and illegality” sheds light onto how legal status shapes different spheres of immigrants’ lives—from labor market outcomes to immediate spheres of social networks, social community participation, and cultural interactions. In the ethnographic study mentioned above, Menjivar followed the experiences of Salvadoran immigrants who arrived in San Francisco at the beginning of the 1980s and were faced with limited job opportunities and strained family and social networks. In her book she concludes that despite limited economic resources and lack of a legal existence, Salvadoran immigrants were resourceful enough to “organize networks to help fellow compatriots advocate for their rights...to fight for improved working conditions and to obtain some form of legal status.”¹¹⁵ The agency of Central Americans in demanding rights to asylum opened up the question of how the state’s failure to apply its own immigration laws created an opportunity for this group immigrants who were discriminated against, to redefine their own relationship to the State. As Cecilia Menjivar (2000) argues, in the face of current policy proposals that seek to limit people’s rights (i.e. DACA or and portable visas for temporary workers, etc) the study of “liminal legality” as experienced by Central Americans, is an essential area of study because it adds new knowledge to the study of citizenship contention within the US immigrant integration experience.¹¹⁶

¹¹⁵ Menjivar, Cecilia. “*Liminal Legality: Salvadoran and Guatemalan Immigrants’ Lives in the United States.*” AJS Volume 111 Number 4 (January 2006) University of Chicago. Pg. 1031

¹¹⁶ Menjivar, Cecilia. Pg. 1033

Further analysis of the “liminal legality” of Central Americans and their struggle for citizenship rights is provided by Susan Bibler Coutin’s book *Legalizing Moves: Salvadoran Immigrants’ Struggle for US Residency*.¹¹⁷ In this extensive, longitudinal ethnographic study, Coutin (2000) tracked the experiences of Salvadoran immigrants in Los Angeles who had spent more than three decades under TPS. She studied how this group organized and built networks and structures of contention to survive and demand legal rights to belong. Those structures of contention included expansive social networks of NGOs and refugee associations, churches and hometown associations, lawyers that challenged pre-existing law, and like-minded social justice organizations that embraced the cause of status for Central Americans in the 80s and 90s.

According to Coutin, although Salvadoran refugees through the 80s had to exist outside the traditional boundaries of citizenship and within a realm of illegality, they used the US Government’s institutional neglect of their refugee plight to their advantage by forcing this same Government to engage in a prolonged battle to justify their discriminatory treatment under immigration law. The prolonged demand for access to refugee law years after they were originally denied access, legitimized their presence in the US. By doing so, they engaged in agency through social movement mobilization that resulted in an acknowledgement of their existence by granting them temporary protections under the TPS program.

¹¹⁷ Coutin, Susan Bibler. *Legalizing Moves: Salvadoran Immigrants’ Struggle for US Residency*. The University of Michigan Press, Ann Arbor, MI. 2000. Pg. 40-42

This process acknowledged their existence as political actors and engrained in the group a sense of social bonding to American political culture. The same level of contention is happening today as TPS holders are engaged in legal battles to challenge the Trump's administration decision to terminate their status. As in the battles of the 1980s, this legal contention within the US legal system allows for TPS holders to declare themselves political actors to demand the state justifies once again its denial of permanent rights.¹¹⁸

The historical political maneuvering of TPS holders to demand permanence is part of the current contention in US society to transform the idea of "citizenship" from one defined solely by the federal government, to one defined by local interactions by members of society. As stated earlier, some theories described citizenship as a concept that is defined not solely by the State, but by those engage in contention at the margins of society "...claiming their rights, demanding inclusion and the right to participate in the very definition of such rights."¹¹⁹ Specifically, the cosmopolitan theory of rights¹²⁰ states that a migrant's presence in a given society - and his/her participation in that society - entitles that migrant to a

¹¹⁸ There are several lawsuits by TPS holders challenging the Trump's administration terminations of TPS in the courts. In October 2018, the Northern District Court of California issued a preliminary [injunction](#), leaving the designations for [Sudan, Nicaragua, Haiti, and El Salvador](#) temporarily in place. TPS holders from Honduras and Nepal are not included in this first lawsuit, but upon elimination of their status, also filed suit. In response, the Trump administration announced its decision to also extend their status for six months or until the local courts adjudicate the cases of all the impacted countries. Advocates expect that all the legal cases will eventually end up in-front of the US Supreme Court where their final adjudication prospects are unknown.
<https://www.americanprogress.org/issues/immigration/news/2019/02/11/466081/know-immigrants-temporary-protected-status/>

¹¹⁹ Clarke 2014

¹²⁰ Seglow, 2005

level of human rights and legal personhood that should transform itself into a claim for permanent citizenship rights.¹²¹

Assimilation: Traditional Measurements

According to Waters and Jimenez,¹²² there are four primary benchmarks political scientists use to measure the assimilation outcomes of immigrants in the United States. Those benchmarks are still based on the experiences of European immigrants who arrived at the turn of the century, but as a matter of comparison, their applicability must still be analyzed for its relevancy to today's integration experience for Central Americans. The key benchmarks are: (a) their socio-economic standing (SES) defined as educational attainment, occupational specialization and parity in earnings; (b) residential segregation, which covers spatial distribution and suburbanization, or their ability to settle outside urban areas; (c) language acquisition, defined as English language ability and loss of mother tongue; and (d) intermarriage - the mixing of different races of cultures to form an authentic American identity.

However, as migration patterns have changed, Waters and Jimenez argue that two additional benchmarks should be included in any analysis of integration: (1)

¹²¹ Coutin, Susan Bibler. Legalizing Moves: Salvadoran Immigrants' Struggle for US Residency. The University of Michigan Press, Ann Arbor, MI. 2000. Pg. 172-174

¹²² Waters, Mary C and Tomas Jimenez. "Assessing Immigrant Assimilation: New Empirical and Theoretical Challenges." *Annual Review of Sociology*. 2005.

the geographical dispersion of immigrants into non-traditional receiving areas (non-urban) and their own outcomes, and (2) the continuing replenishment of immigrants through ongoing migration from the same regions. While specific data on the four primary benchmarks of assimilation are difficult to track for TPS holders via BLS (Bureau of Labor Statistics) or census data, this research project will attempt to evaluate the integration process of TPS holders in the six domains identified by Waters and Jimenez by asking specific questions in the survey instrument about their own interpretation of their experience. As stated earlier, this study focuses on the subjective evaluation of TPS holders' own experience, which include the six areas outlined by Waters and Jimenez.

Segmented Assimilation

The concept of assimilation in American culture has been mostly defined by the experiences of European migrants at the turn of the century. However, as explained by Portes,¹²³ the European experience cannot be replicated by immigrants who arrived in the US after the 1965 immigration reform law. This is due to the fact that migration has been primarily non-white and had to contend with issues of race, ethnic discrimination, and limited economic opportunities driven by changes in the US industrial base. Hence, most non-white recent immigrants, even those with legality, have limited access to quick economic mobility. According to Portes (1990), in some instances, their integration process leads to

¹²³ Portes Alejandro and Min Zhou. "The New Second Generation: Segmented Assimilation and Its Variants." *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*. Vol. 530 Nov. 1993. Pp. 74-96

different tracks in their assimilation path and ends up in what he calls segmented assimilation. Portes defines the outcome of segmented assimilation as having three possible outcomes: (1) assimilation into the American middle-class that offers the fulfillment of the American Dream, (2) assimilation that goes in the opposite direction to permanent poverty and the underclass of American society, or (3) separation by ethnic enclaves where the community preserves its cultures and values and exists outside of the American mainstream. Each segmented assimilation outcome is wholly dependent upon the context that immigrants find in their new country upon arrival. This context is illustrated in the Modes of Incorporation model developed by Portes and Rumbaut¹²⁴, which outlines a typology of vulnerability and resources affecting the outcomes of immigrants' - and their descendants' - lives. The context includes political relations between sending and receiving countries, the complex policies set by the host country to limit rights claims, the values and prejudices of the receiving society, the state of the economy determining upward mobility, and the characteristics of the co-ethnic community upon arrival.¹²⁵

Cecilia Menjivar¹²⁶ described the experience of TPS holders upon arrival as a stratified system of belonging that has set this specific group on a path of segmented assimilation with their eventual group outcome unknown until the first,

¹²⁴ Portes, Alejandro and Ruben G. Rumbaut. *Immigrant America: A Portrait*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990. Pg. 91.

¹²⁵ Portes Alejandro and Min Zhou. "The New Second Generation: Segmented Assimilation and Its Variants." *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*. Vol. 530 Nov. 1993. Pp. 74-96

¹²⁶ Menjivar, Cecilia. "Liminal Legality: Salvadoran and Guatemalan Immigrants' Lives in the United States." *AJS* Volume 111 Number 4 (January 2006) University of Chicago. Pg. 1006

second, and third generation become of age. In order to understand TPS holders' current integration experiences, it will be useful to understand where they fall on Portes and Rumbaut's model, and whether their group profile of vulnerabilities has already delegated them to a segmented assimilation track for their first, second, and third generation of descendants. Under the Portes and Rumbaut model, this group profile of vulnerability includes individual characteristics of social economic status (SES), as well as political opportunity structures (POS) that have responded to this group's unconventional political participation and social movement mobilization in their contention for rights to stay and belong.

Assimilation versus Integration

An evaluation of the integration experiences of Central Americans under TPS requires an understanding of the literature available on the concept of immigrant integration and assimilation, and also on the individual group experience by location to the demands for rights. It also necessitates an understanding of the difference, if any, between the two concepts. The idea of America as a melting pot includes the assumption that immigrants eventually shed their ethnic identity and become fully assimilated Americans. In this sense, as Ramakrishnan¹²⁷ states, *"[A]ssimilation is a process more concerned with individual outcomes, which with the passing of time, aggregate at the group level to declare one group more or less assimilated than the other."*

¹²⁷ Ramakrishnan, Karthick S. "Incorporation versus Assimilation," Pg. 27-39 in J. Hochschild J. Chattopadhyay, C. Gay and M. Jones Correa, *Outsiders no More? Models of Political Incorporation*. Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press. 2013

Also, as described by Portes (1990):

[A]ssimilation is linked to an expectation that foreigners will shed, or least contain, their native cultures while embracing the mores and language of the host country. Or put more succinctly, assimilation has always been a more than convenient word to enumerate the ways in which immigrants survive; it has also been a term disclosing hopes about how immigrants should behave.¹²⁸

Assimilation, therefore, is the eventual desirable outcome expected for immigrants and their descendants by the dominant culture. This process in the United States happens under an informal incorporation system that sets different starting points for different groups of migrants depending on their status at their point of entry. In this sense, before assimilation outcomes can be measured for any individual group, the experiences of immigrants upon their arrival in the United States must be understood because they determine which assimilation track the current integration process creates for the entire group.

For the purpose of this study, integration is not defined as an outcome but a process on a continuum under which immigrants interface with formal and informal local political systems that aid or limit their integration choices and their eventual

¹²⁸ Fernandez Kelly, Patricia M and Richard Schauffler. "Divided Fates: Immigrant Children and the New Assimilation." In Alejandro Portes, The Second Generation. Russell Sage Foundation. New Work, NY. 1996. Pg. 30

group assimilation outcomes. Because of the conditions of their arrival and their current status of liminal legality, this research proposal will focus on the current integration experiences of Central Americans under TPS in two local hubs of settlement and will evaluate whether - based on their current experiences - potential policy recommendations can be made to improve the eventual outcomes for this group's assimilation into American society.

Integration Regimes

In his analysis of integration systems in western liberal democracies, Gary Freeman states that: "[I]ncorporation is the product of the intersection of migrant aspirations and strategies with regulatory frameworks in four domains—state, market, welfare, and culture. However, hardly anything can be more important for the eventual integration of immigrants than the legal circumstances of their initial entry."¹²⁹ Their legal or illegal status upon entry sets the stage for access to other domains of integration, mainly the market, welfare, and culture. After illegal arrival into a hostile environment, Central Americans under TPS were eventually granted some level of legality by being given access to the market via a legal permit to work. However, the state failed to give them access to welfare and cultural domains. TPS did not make Central Americans eligible for any type of formal resettlement support under the US political refugee and social welfare system. As such, they used their agency to survive with hostile societal reception in

¹²⁹ Freeman, Gary. "Immigrant Incorporation in Western Democracies." *The International Migration Review*. Vol. 38. No. 3. Fall 2004. Pg. 945-969

a system of local opportunity structures mostly driven by ethnic compatriots, churches, and community advocacy groups. Their limited legality afforded security from deportation, but not access to other domains of integration such as welfare and culture that could have facilitated their economic and social mobility.

In a recent study of the integration of immigrants in American Society, a panel of experts on integration of immigrants explained that the process of integration as follows:

*... has both economic sociocultural dimensions... [it] begins with the newcomers and continues through the second generation and beyond. The process... depends upon the participation of immigrants and their descendants in major social institutions such as schools and the labor market, as well as their acceptance by other Americans. Greater integration implies movement toward parity of critical life opportunities, with the native-born American majority...*¹³⁰

Following this model of eventual parity with the American-born majority as a valuable prism through which to evaluate eventual group assimilation, this research proposal will seek to find out whether the circumscribed rights afforded to TPS

¹³⁰ Waters, Mary and Pineau, Gerstain. "The Integration of Immigrants into American Society." Committee on Population, Division of Behavioral, Social Sciences and Education. The National Academy of Science, Engineering and Medicine. The National Academies Press. Washington, DC. 2015

holders within the realm of access to the labor market has given Central Americans more access to other realms of life opportunities, and whether those rights put this group on a better integration process continuum than their fellow undocumented migrants. The idea of “parity of critical life opportunities” for Central Americans with limited citizenship rights must be examined, as it impacts the prospects for eventual assimilation of their descendants who are born on US soil and, henceforth, are American citizens.

Transnationalism: An Impediment to Integration?

Traditional political science theorists measure incorporation in terms of an immigrant group’s ability to shed its connection to its country of origin and converge with the native population by adapting core American values such as patriotism, electoral participation, and economic self-sufficiency.¹³¹ This model was forged during the incorporation battles of the 1960s, where migrants converged into urban centers and adopted some of the ethnic- and race-centered approaches of rights-demands formulated by African-American, Puerto Rican, and Mexican-American struggles for equality. Based on the 1960s model, immigrants of today do not quite fit the traditional model of complete convergence with the native population as a prerequisite for a traditional understanding of assimilation. Their lives are influenced by transnational regulatory regimes (e.g. trade, temporary work

¹³¹ Falcon, Angelo. “*Black and Latino Politics in NYC: Race and Ethnicity in a Changing Urban Context.*” In Latinos and the Political System, edited by f. Chris Garcia. Notre Dame, Indiana. University of Notre Dame Press. 1988.

visas, lack of family reunification, etc.), and many are still connected to their homelands via familial, economic, and cultural bonds.¹³²

Ewa Morawska¹³³ described transnationalism as the voluntary and/or involuntary involvement in the affairs of one's country of origin via familial or economic bonds that continuously work to renew cultural connectedness to their home countries. Despite such levels of engagement, she argued, transnationalism still does not preclude the integration process from taking place for immigrants. She argues that immigrants' participation in transnationalism does not directly impede the assimilation outcomes of their first-generation descendants, and it disappears for the second and third generation.¹³⁴

TPS holders do not have access to family reunification channels, but despite almost 20 years of living in the United States without the ability to travel freely back and forth,¹³⁵ they have managed to maintain familial bonds with their loved ones left behind. They remain connected with their home countries via remittances and

¹³² Minnite, Lorraine C. "Lost in Translation?: A Critical Reappraisal of the Concept of Immigrant Political Incorporation." Chapter Four in Jennifer Hochschild and John Mollenkopf, Bringing Outsiders In: Transatlantic Perspectives on Immigrant Political Incorporation. Cornell University Press. Ithaca, NY and London, UK. 2009.

¹³³ Joppke, Christian and Ewa Morawska. Toward Assimilation and Citizenship: Immigrants in Liberal Nation States. Palgrave/McMillan, New York, NY. 2003.

¹³⁴ Collomp, Catherine. Review of "Toward Assimilation and Citizenship in Liberal National States." Christian Joppke and Ewa Morawska. *Journal of American Ethnic History*. Vol. 24, No. 3. Spring 2005. Pp. 119-121

¹³⁵ TPS allows for limited travel in extreme circumstances, but a petition for permission to travel has to be filed with Homeland Security in advance of departure with a specific reason for travel. Many are afraid to ask for permission as they do not want to risk not being able to reenter, or for any exit to limit their ability to claim that they cannot be forced to return home for personal safety reasons. As a result, the percentage of TPS holders who travel back and forth to their home countries to visit relatives is very small.

engaging in transnational aid projects via participation in home-town associations, churches, soccer leagues, cultural/musical exchanges, and beauty pageant contests around traditional holidays. The constant renewal of immigrants from the same region has also helped these communities keep their cultural heritage and societal connections alive, as newer and younger connections are made and current trends are shared. Given this forced transnational experience, this research study seeks to measure whether the forced transnationalism experienced by TPS holders impacts their integration process, and to what extent the lack of family reunification and the emotional trauma of forced family separation has impacted their sense of belonging in the US.

Measurements of Subjective Integration

As identified by Leisy Abrego and Sarah Lakhani,¹³⁶ the most difficult aspect of being in limited legality under TPS is the ability to signal to others that TPS holders are entitled to some rights in their local communities. As such, even though they experience some legality, TPS holders still also experience discrimination by the dominant society who does not understand their legal standing.

¹³⁶ Abrego Leisy J and Sarah M Lahani. "Incomplete Inclusion: Legal Violence and Immigrants in Liminal Legal Statutes." Law & Policy Journal. Vol. 37, No. 4, The University of Denver. October 2015

Using a legal violence framework, Abrego and Lakhani argue that TPS holders face structural and symbolic forms of violence also imposed on the undocumented. In Abrego and Lakhani's study, the assertion that TPS grants these immigrants a sense of stability and socio-economic mobility, secure employment, and better housing and education options is tested against their actual, everyday experience living with the uncertainty of eventual renewal or decline of their legal status. In this study, the authors argue that because the dominant society does not fully understand the kind of legal standing this group has, those under TPS experience constant uncertainty of control of their future, blocked mobility, a persistent fear of lack of renewal of their work permit, fear of eventual deportation, instability in their social lives, confusion as to their future options, and self-blame for their inability to achieve social stability and economic mobility. These experiences translate into high levels of psychological trauma and social alienation that limits their sense of belonging in society.

Chebel d'Appollonia (2015) argues that integration trajectories measure both functional and cognitive aspects of the immigrants' integration experience in the dominant society. Functional aspects relate to the formal aspects of societal participation, such as work and political participation. However, cognitive aspects involve self-identification and collective identity, as well as feelings of belonging and loyalty to the society in which they reside. In evaluating the subjective interpretation of their own integration, this research project attempts to examine the

level of sense of belonging and connection individuals have to their local communities and how they see their individual acceptance as dependent on the group's social-capital growth and immersion in the local community. As outlined by Chebel d'Appollonia, the development of the group's social capital is critical for the integration of immigrant and minority groups. Positive individual self-perception and self-identification, as well as a sense of positive economic mobility, leads to social bonding, organizational membership, and attachment to a common identity as Americans. This research study will attempt to explore whether individuals experienced feelings of exclusion and blocked mobility, and whether those experiences have led to a limited sense of belonging within American society.

Unconventional Mobilization & Social Bonding

Academic research on the political integration of immigrants often focuses on the experiences of those immigrants who achieve formal citizenship rights. However, as Cook (2013) explains in her model of inclusion, immigrants in illegal, temporary, and conditional status domains get to experience some level of inclusion through their ability to participate in unconventional forms of political mobilization such as protests, rallies, and hunger strikes. They do so by being active in a range of social movement mobilization structures such as community organizations, unions, churches, hometown associations, advocacy groups, soccer leagues, and non-governmental groups that help them call attention to their lack

of rights or advance their potential for achieving policy changes for permanent rights. For Central Americans, their experiences of political activism to achieve TPS demonstrates that their group agency mobilizing against the unfair denial of refugee status resulted in a limited level of inclusion. From this perspective, and as described by Nhu-Ngoc Ong and David Meyer,¹³⁷ the role of agency and self-organization over policy outcomes becomes the best measure of immigrant integration. However, as explained by Hochschild and Mollenkopf,¹³⁸ even when some level of political incorporation through mobilization structures exists, it does not necessarily translate into permanent solutions that facilitate the group's integration into society.

In Hochschild's model of political incorporation, non-incorporation can occur at any point in the integration process of immigrants if the polity fails to respond positively to their demands.¹³⁹ When the polity responds negatively by exacerbating exclusionary regimes, hostility between immigrants and the host society increases, leading to further alienation of the immigrant communities. In some instances, it can even lead to radicalization and xenophobia. This negative reaction to immigrant political participation can also lead to different forms of voluntary immigrant non-incorporation, or what Chebel d'Appollonia¹⁴⁰ calls "retreatism."

¹³⁷ Ong, Nhu-Ngoc and David Meyer. "Protest and Political Incorporation: Vietnamese American Protest, 1975-2001." University of California, Irvine. Center for the Study of Democracy. 2004.

¹³⁸ Hochschild, Jennifer L. and John H. Mollenkopf. "Modeling Immigrant Political Incorporation," Chapter 2 in Bringing Outsiders In: Transatlantic Perspectives on Immigrant Political Incorporation. Cornell University Press. Ithaca NY and London, UK. 2009.

¹³⁹ Hochschild, Jennifer L. and John H. Mollenkopf. Bringing Outsiders In: Transatlantic Perspectives on Immigrant Political Incorporation. Cornell University Press. 2009. Pg. 17

¹⁴⁰ Chebel d'Appollonia, Ariane. Migrant Mobilization and Securitization in the USA and Europe. How does it feel to be a threat? Palgrave MacMillan, New York, NY. 2015

Retreatism is a form of active non-incorporation by which people react to both objective and non-objective discrimination by choosing to isolate themselves from society at large. In the case of TPS holders, it is important to measure whether their prolonged status of temporality has led to more or less voluntary non-integration or to notions of subjective integration. This research proposal will seek to evaluate TPS holders' perception of their own integration experiences in the USA. It will attempt to answer whether, regardless of their lack of access to citizenship rights, they still perceive themselves as belonging to American society and, thus, maintain a positive view of their own integration.

In the process of evaluating TPS holders' subjective sense of integration, it is important to determine whether this population's self-agency and unconventional civic engagement- or social movement mobilization in the quest to acquire rights - can be interpreted as creating a bonding process with the political systems (POS) in the communities in which they reside. Their level of embeddedness and trust in local and national political regimes could demonstrate a level of adaption to the norms of civic engagement in the political institutions of the United States that promote bonding with society. As explained by Ramakrishnam and Bloemraad,¹⁴¹ civic participation by any group can be conceptualized in three levels: (1) the individual, (2) the organizational, and (3) the ethnic group. Activism within any of these three spheres to achieve a larger public good creates bonding

¹⁴¹ Ramakrishnan, Karthick & Irene Bloemraad, Ed. *Civic Hopes and Political Realities: Immigrants, Community Organizations and Political Engagement*. Russell Sage Foundation, New York, NY. 2008. Pg. 11

between the group and the society at-large. In the struggle to achieve rights, Central American refugees became political actors who used unconventional political tactics to be able to maneuver the American political system to achieve legality. TPS holders have a history of actively participating in advocacy by attending protest and rallies, joining national networks, lobbying members of Congress, submitting court filings as plaintiffs, engaging in letter writing, and civil disobedience to make their presence known to politicians and the state.

This level of political engagement has been sustained over long periods of time, and it still continues today with the support of a national network of social justice organizations who are connected to local Central American leaders committed to organizing limited resources to advocate for this population's rights at work and in their communities. The embeddedness to social justice organizing impacts how local political opportunity structures (POS) and other Latino civil rights groups react to the groups' current agency demanding immediate action to protect them with the same level of priority given to DREAMERs.

As part of this research, it is important to evaluate the process by which this community engages in social movement organizing to develop systems for unconventional political participation. Additionally, it will be important to evaluate whether TPS holders: 1) see participation in local organizations as critical or

necessary to their own ability to retain the rights that they already hold, and 2) see agency as a strategy to prove their own social bonding to the norms, values, and institutions of the US.

Social Movement Mobilization

As stated earlier, because Central American immigrants did not have access to legality upon their arrival, they were dependent on the non-profit organizations, churches, local religious activist networks for their survival and early adaption into the cities where they arrived. This laissez-faire approach to their initial group experience allowed for early networks of social justice groups to engage in unconventional political mobilization to fight for their refugee status. Later those same leaders transformed their refugee status demands into a demand for the right to stay, and today, into a right to belong.

Nichols and Uitermark,¹⁴² argue that those initial acts of contention and social justice mobilization by Central American leaders transformed cities like Los Angeles and San Francisco in the 1980s and 1990s into hotbeds of social activism. Central American refugees had legitimate grievances and their demands for inclusionary policies became more expansive as they try to build their lives in unwelcomed local regimes of exclusion. The leaders of this community, many of

¹⁴² Nicholls, Walter J. and Justus Uitermark. Cities and Social Movements: Immigrants Rights Activism in the United States, France, and the Netherlands, 1970-2015. John Wiley and Sons., Ltd. 2017

whom had experience fighting repression from right-wing governments back in their home countries, were adept at social movement organizing and quickly developed activist clusters and activist networks to scale up their local demands for rights into a national demand for refugee status.

Those early clusters of activist networks formed national networks of non-profits and civil rights organizations such as El Rescate (1981), CISPES (1981), CARECEN-LA, DC, NY (1980), CHIRLA (1996), and NDLON (1991).¹⁴³ Through appeals to human rights and family rights, these organizations, its leaders and the immigrants themselves, challenged their own illegality by engaging in organized local contention to transform local regimes of exclusion into local regimes of inclusion. This initial contention proved effective locally and has opened up opportunities to expand nationally to create local networks across the US that continue to mobilized nationally to achieve rights for Central Americans.

After achieving some level of legality through TPS in the 1980s however, organizations like CHIRLA and NDLON in Los Angeles, moved away from the national mobilization framework of legalization and transformed their work into a local

¹⁴³ The complete number/name of community organizations in the Central American community are difficult to identify, as there are very few actual records and any one listing of them. However, some of the most prominent groups organizing Central American migrants since the early 1980s are: El Rescate LA, CHIRLA, CARECEN-LA, CARECEN-DC, CRECEN-Houston, Centro Romero-Chicago, Centro PRESENTE-Boston, Centro Comunitario-CEUS-NJ, CARECEN-NY, and Centro Cuzcatlan-New York. In the early 1990s, NDLON (the National Day Laborers Organizing Network) emerged as a group advocating for the rights of Central American day-laborers in Los Angeles, CA. Since then, NDLON has expanded its reach nationally and are now the leaders of the #SaveTPS Campaign and lead organizers of the National TPS Alliance.

framework to defend the rights immigrants locally. By focusing on different local rights campaigns across the US in the mid 1990s, NDLOM unleashed various pressure points to create change at the local level that simultaneously built their organizational capacity nationally. By defending local ordinances against immigrants in housing policies or against day-laborers looking for work on the streets, they built a network of activists and leaders that were not just interested in one issue - legalization per se - but in a multiplicity of related issues: the rights of workers at work, community organizing against racial profiling by the police, police brutality, and ICE raids. This multitude of issues allowed them to build alliances with other social justice and minority groups who faced the same issues in the urban areas where immigrants were settling and demanding rights to live and work peacefully.¹⁴⁴ Learning from their experience in the DREAMERS movement, NDLOM understands that the strategy of localizing the struggle for rights is an effective mechanism for scaling up pressure via networks mobilization of activists across the US. Hence, by engaging local organizations and helping them organize local committees of TPS members from across nationalities, NDLOM hopes to once again demand national action in favor of TPS holders. The Save TPS campaign organized by National TPS Alliance has been effective, so far, in elevating the need for action and the equality of urgency on behalf of both TPS and DACA holders.¹⁴⁵

¹⁴⁴ Nicholls, Walter J. and Justus Uitermark. Cities and Social Movements: Immigrants Rights Activism in the United States, France, and the Netherlands, 1970-2015. John Wiley and Sons., Ltd. 2017 Pg. 186-187

¹⁴⁵ <https://www.nationaltpsalliance.org>

The empirical analysis of the literature reviewed in this chapter provides a basic prism through which to evaluate the experience of the population that participated in the interviews in this qualitative study. The conclusions will highlight potential integration outcomes for this population that can be used to evaluate future policy to address the integration of immigrants in the US.

CHAPTER FIVE: DATA ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

The results of the analysis of the interview data will be discussed in this chapter.

In total, ten major themes connected to the research questions emerged from the data in the interviews. The ten themes are clustered into three major concepts as follows:

1. Challenges of being TPS: This concept comprises the themes connected to the experience of arrival and of living in the US as TPS. It highlights how the participant has felt and managed expectations within their own experience. The themes clustered in this concept are: (a) context of arrival, (b) personal expectations, and (c) community engagement.
2. Personal Agency under TPS: This concept comprises themes that describe immigrants' own sense of understanding of their experience and their agency in changing their current reality. The themes clustered in this concept are: (d) societal bonding, (e) transnationalism, and (f) mobilization-social movement activity.
3. Sense of Belonging as TPS: This concept comprises themes that describe their current feelings of belonging. The themes included here are: (g) ability to plan for future, (h) discrimination as a group, (i) discrimination as an individual, and (k) sense of belonging to US society.

In total there were 29 interviews that were subject to this study. Eighteen of the interviews were conducted in the New Jersey area and 11 were conducted in Washington DC. The final number of interviews was determined at the point of saturation of responses.

The interviews generated significant data that was used to analyze the integration phenomena for this group and to make conclusions and recommendations. The list of analytical categories with their description, number of sources cited, and relevant number of times the category was cited are available in Appendix One. NVivo computer software¹⁴⁶ was used to analyze and organize the codes, categories, and themes for this study. The NVivo provides the opportunity to check for density of category results in the data, and to organize by themes connected to research questions which allow for ease in tracking the original text. The analytical categories are derived from information obtained from the subjects' interviews that were deemed relevant to the evaluation of the overriding theory and phenomena of integration as outlined under the key research questions of this study. As stated earlier, there are ten critical themes that were observed and analyzed to provide data for reaching relevant conclusions.

¹⁴⁶ NVivo Computer software allows for easy tracking of patterns and themes on qualitative research. See Saldana, Johnny. The Coding Manual for Qualitative Researchers. SAGE Publications Inc. 2016

The data section of this chapter will begin with a discussion of the demographic profile of the participants in the study and how their profile is similar or different from the general TPS population. This analysis will provide a basic understanding of the socio-economic dynamics influencing the experiences of those who participated in this study. Following the demographic analysis, the chapter will proceed by defining the relevant concepts and themes observed in the data and how they relate to the research questions. Each theme will be evaluated by the density observed in the data responses and how much the responses corresponded to the relevant concept and the research question. All conclusions based on the analysis of the data will be provided in Chapter Six.

Demographic Profile

As illustrated by Table 11, the demographic make-up of the interview participants for this study captured the ethnic representation of those Central Americans currently under TPS; 75% of the interview participants were Salvadorans, 24% were Hondurans, and only 1% were Nicaraguans.

Table 11: Demographics Participants

Location	Salvadorans	Hondurans	Nicaraguans	Male	Female	Total
NY/NJ	11	7	0	5	13	18
DC Metro	11	0	1	9	2	11
Total Interviews in this Study	22	7	1	14	15	29
* % of this pop on TPS	75%	21%	1%			97%
* % of this pop interviewed for study	75%	24%	1%	49%	51%	100%

The gender breakdown of the 29 interview participants was 49% male and 51% female, a number that is inversely different than the overall gender make-up of the current TPS population which stands at roughly 55% male, and 45% female.¹⁴⁷ It is important to note that more women than men were willing to participate in this study, as women were more willing to engage in an interview and respond to personal questions regarding their status and their future plans. The process of trust building was more easily delineated with other women as the PI was able to more easily associate and engage informally with them and develop trust by aiding in the organizing of local gatherings via food offerings and activity planning. As explained by Cresswell 2013, we empower individuals “to share their stories, hear their voices, when we minimize power relationships” that exist between the researcher and the participants by engaging with them in their own context and in their own activities. More women often volunteer to plan meetings and prepare meals, as such there was more opportunity to engage with other women in an informal manner that would allow for the process of trust building to happen organically.

As illustrated by Table 12, the median age of the twenty-nine TPS holder participants was 42 years old (45.5 years old for New Jersey and 42 years old for Washington DC), a group that is older than the average undocumented

¹⁴⁷ <http://cmsny.org/tpstablebystate/>

immigrant population which currently stands at approximately 35 years of age.¹⁴⁸

This median age was also much older than the average age for the Latino population which currently stands at 28 years of age. However, the median age of 42 for TPS holders is still younger than the median age for the White-Caucasian population which stands at 43 years old as of 2015.¹⁴⁹

Table 12: Age and Family Composition					
		Fe- male	Male		TOTAL
Number of Participants					29
Gender		15	14		
Age Median)					42 years
Marital Status					
	Married	7	6	13	45%
	Single	4	2	6	20%
	Co-habiting	2	3	5	17%
	Divorced	1	3	4	14%
	Widow	1	—	1	3%
Living in Mixed-Status Families					
	TPS	10			
	DACA	3			
	Undocu	5			
	Citizen/PR	4			
	Other	7			
Children					93%
Children Status*	US Citizens	19			65%
	TPS or DACA	10			
	Home Country	7			
Children living w them in US					76%
* Some participants have US born children & children left behind, hence total does not equal 100%					

¹⁴⁸ <https://www.migrationpolicy.org/data/unauthorized-immigrant-population/state/US>

¹⁴⁹ <http://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2017/09/18/how-the-u-s-hispanic-population-is-changing/>

Table 12 above illustrates that, in terms of family composition, 62% of participants were married or co-habiting, plus 14% were divorced and providing for their children. Only 20% were single, with more women than men identifying themselves as such. According to Menjivar (2017) this rate in family structure is comparable to general American population, of which 30% live in single-person households headed by women. With respect to children, 93% of participants had an average of 3.9 children, which is a rate higher than the undocumented population, the legal immigrant population, and the US general population. Menjivar (2017) attributes this phenomenon to the fact that TPS holders are older than the general immigrant group population, they arrived to the US in their prime reproductive years, and many have formed new and dual families - one here in the US and the one left behind in their home countries.

As illustrated in Table 12, 76% of participants in this study have their kids residing with them in the United States - women were more likely than men to have all their children in the US with them. As with the general TPS population, 65% of TPS holders in this study have US-born children who are American citizens.¹⁵⁰ But the majority of them live in families where children and spouses have different types of immigration status including US- born children, children with TPS or DACA status, and children who are undocumented. They also have older

¹⁵⁰ <http://cmsny.org/tpstablebystate/>

children who still reside in their home countries, who already have their own families. Hence, the impact of living within mixed-status families and the transnationalism of having children abroad will be identified as a key phenomenon that impacts their emotional and economic well-being in the US, as well as their sense of belonging.

As illustrated in Table 13, another key demographic fact to analyze is this group's labor force participation which stands at 95%, with the majority of them working more than one job or adding income by doing extra jobs and or having small businesses on the side. Even those who reported themselves as disabled or retired were working to bring in some income. Similar to recent findings (Menjivar 2017), the labor force participation of this group of TPS holders is higher than that of the general population (which stands at 62.9%). Given the fact that TPS holders have no access to any social safety-net programs, they are often fully employed as they depend solely on their labor for economic survival.

Table 13 also shows that another important finding for this group is their level of entrepreneurship, which in this study stands at 24% - a significant number given TPS holders' full employment levels but low access to investment capital for entrepreneurial activities. For comparison purposes, recent studies reveal that the overall level of entrepreneurial activity (self-employment) for the general TPS

population stands at approximately 11%, with the majority of the activity being in small businesses in the industries where the population is currently employed.¹⁵¹

In both population hubs, self-employment occupations range from small house cleaning companies, landscaping, or truck-driving operations to construction management enterprises. Few notable exceptions were a key number of educated professionals who came to the US as children and were able to attend high-school, knew English well, and had the ability to get some university or certificate trainings. This small cohort reported higher levels of income and more embeddedness to their community, owned homes, and had private retirements savings like 401Ks through their employers.

Table 13 also shows that the average annual income for a TPS holder in NJ was \$37,700 (the lowest income was at \$13K per year, to highest at \$145K). The average income for TPS holders appeared lower in New Jersey than in Washington DC where incomes stood at an average of \$49,000 per year, with one outlier of a business owner who described his assets at 1.5 million. There also appear to be age differential earnings, as younger TPS holders with higher levels of education in the US have a higher earning capacity than older TPS holders who had little training in the US.

¹⁵¹ <http://cmsny.org/tpstablebystate/>

A key point in the data is that NJ TPS holders in the study were also older than those who participated from the DC area, who were younger and worked in craft jobs in the construction industry as mechanics or had their own cleaning business. Given that the NY/NJ area has a higher cost of living than the DC area,¹⁵² the fact that the income of NJ TPS holders appeared to be lower than their counterparts in the DC Metro area is an area in need of further study.

Table 13: Labor Force Participation & Economic Indicators		
		TOTAL
Number of Participants		29
Labor Force Participation		95%
Level of Entrepreneurship		24%
Average time living in US		21.1 years
Annual Income		
	NJ	\$37K
	WDC	\$49K
Level of Education/Training in US	48%	
	Primary Ed in Home Country	15
	Some college-home country	10
	Some Training or College in US	14
Payment of Taxes		94%
Home Ownership		27%
Access to Health Insurance (Employer provided or ObamaCare)		72%
	Employer Provided	65%
	Obama Care or Charity Care	17%
	None	18%
Access to Retirement Savings (401K)		31%

¹⁵² https://www.nj.com/news/index.ssf/2017/06/a_typical_nj_resident_needs_to_make_this_much_to_a.html

Since proof of paying taxes is a condition for renewal of TPS, the overwhelming majority of participants in this study - 94% - of them pay taxes and contribute to Social Security and Medicare without any ability to ever draw from any of these social programs. Even the approximately 24% who described themselves as entrepreneurs report paying payroll taxes for their employees, and report paying income tax on their business and personal income. TPS holders in this study who were entrepreneurs employed an average of 8 workers, with several of them reporting subcontractor agreements in the construction industry. On average, this group of TPS holders has lived in the US for an average of 21.1 years, which is concurrent with the general number of 20 years for the majority of TPS holders.

Table 13 also illustrates that about 27% of the TPS participants in the study in both localities reported owning a home, with others reporting that owning a home in the future was a personal goal. Despite higher levels of income observed in WDC, the rate of home ownership appeared to be the same in both localities. As explained by Menjivar (2017) the rate of 27% home ownership is comparable to other TPS studies and is significant because it demonstrates that despite their high levels of insecurity. TPS holders seek some level of permanence for their children by deciding to invest in a home in neighborhoods that can provide better educational opportunities. Compared to the undocumented however, TPS holders, in general, do have a higher level of home ownership as they have a higher sense of everyday security (no threat of deportation) than those without any

documents (McConnell 2015). Therefore, a 27% level of home ownership for TPS holders in the study demonstrates a higher sense of permanence for both regions.

As stated earlier, it is important to notice that the annual income for the majority of TPS holders in NJ was \$37K per year - barely above average earnings for undocumented workers in the USA, which stands at \$36K.¹⁵³ Quite differently, in the Washington DC area, the average earnings for TPS holders in the study stood at \$49K, and closer to the average US median income level of \$54K. One possible explanation for this differential is that TPS holders in DC reported having higher levels of education and training in the USA, with many of them stating specific certification and training in the trades as carpenters, electricians, masons, car mechanics, chefs, and hotel housekeeping managers.

In NJ, on the other hand, the highest levels of income were reported from TPS holders who had arrived in the US as children, completed high school in the US, attended some college and obtain either some level of college training or a certificate in specialized training, and were fully bilingual.

¹⁵³ <https://www.usnews.com/news/articles/2016-03-01/study-undocumented-immigrants-pay-billions-in-taxes>. This report estimates the average income of an "undocumented family" is a little more than \$30,000, well below the country's median household income of around \$54,000.

Overall, the TPS participants in this study from NJ were older and reported having received less education and training in the US than their counterparts in the DC area. Overall, TPS holders in this study reported that the biggest benefits received from having TPS were the following:

- protection from deportation which gave them a sense of permanence;
- ability to obtain a driver's license and drive without fear of being stopped by the police which gave them mobility and a sense of protection; and
- the ability to work legally and with more rights than the undocumented.

Further implications of the effects of TPS benefits will be explored further in the Findings section of this chapter.

The Concepts

As illustrated in Figure 1, the TPS Bounded Integration model introduced in this study includes two dimensions of integration, an objective and a subjective one. The objective dimension of integration as applied to this population is exemplified by the demographic profile of this population as expanded above. The focus of this study, however, is the subjective measures of integration that will be analyzed using an ethnographic research design to decode meaning from the data gathered in the field interviews. The themes observed under this study are clustered into three concepts areas that come from the information provided by each individual. The research tool that guided the interview contained questions

relevant to their personal experiences. Those questions were meant to spark conversation around subject areas connected to the key research questions in the study.

The concepts that evolved from the themes are the following:

- (1) Challenges of being TPS,
- (2) Personal Agency under TPS, and
- (3) Sense of belonging as TPS.

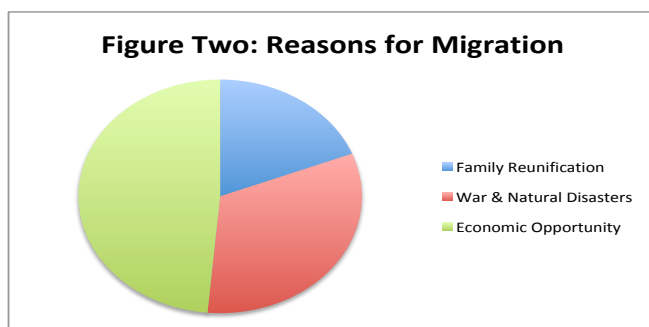
The following reviews the concepts and the findings in each category.

Challenges of Being TPS

This concept comprises the themes connected to the experience of arrival and of living in the US as TPS. The themes highlighted in this concept focus on how the participant has felt and has managed personal expectations upon arrival and after many years in legal limbo. There are three major themes clustered in this concept: (1) context of arrival, (2) personal expectations, and (3) community engagement.

1. Context of Arrival: This category refers to the challenges originating from their original reason for immigrating, as it set the parameters of their exodus from their home countries and the legal migratory framework that

received them and shaped their experience upon arrival. Four analytical patterns of codes were identified under this category: family reunification, war & natural disasters and economic opportunity. The analytical patterns refer to specific reasons given by the participant that explained their decision to migrate and how that led them to their eventual reason for being able to qualify for TPS protection. Figure 2 below illustrates the breakdown of the findings in this category.



The following are the conclusions on this category of the data findings:

- a. Family Reunification: In this category 20% of the participants expressed that the original reason for coming to the United States was to reunite with their spouses or with their parents. Ten percent of the respondents were children at the time of their migration and expressed reuniting with their parents as main reason for migration. The rest were adults reuniting with their spouses and / or siblings. In both cases, Hondurans received TPS in 1999 and Salvadorans in 2001. Those who came as children spent an average 8 years as

undocumented youth, however since they were enrolled in high school, they were unaware of their status until attempting to work or attend college. Participant #005NJ, who arrived at the age of 14 in 1991 stated: *“My mother decided to bring me here for a better future, as all of our parents want. But it was never my idea to come to this country.”*

- b. War & Natural Disasters: In this category, 34% of participants expressed that the reason for receiving TPS was war or natural disasters. Of this group, 10% were Salvadorans who had originally received TPS under the first program in 1991, then applied for ABC and NACARA, and failed to obtain papers under both programs. They spent time in and out of status (illegal) and finally received TPS again in 2001. Participant #010NJ, who arrived in 1990 best expressed the frustration of this regulatory process when he stated: *“Yes, we... apply in the 90s, and my parents went to see a notary who, unfortunately, either filed the paperwork wrong or didn’t file it altogether, so unfortunately, we couldn’t get our residence...[under ABC or NACARA]...”*

Participant #010DC who arrived in 1996 as a youth and spent some time as undocumented stated the following: *“...[M]y mother’s asylum was rejected for some reason. It was removed, so I wasn’t*

covered either, but as I got a social security number, even though I had been working illegally that year, I could still do my taxes....”

The many reasons why TPS holders fall in and out of status have been documented in previous literature. For the purposes of this study, it is important to notice that, in general, those who had qualified for TPS in the early 1990s as adults are older now, almost of retirement age but still working to provide for themselves and their families. Nevertheless, they have lived in the US for more 29+ years and despite several attempts, have no ability yet to regulate their status so they can have a path to residency and qualify for Social Security and/or Medicare in their old age. The implications of this status on older people has not yet been analyzed but it is a worthy area of study, as most TPS holders are generally older than the general immigrant population.

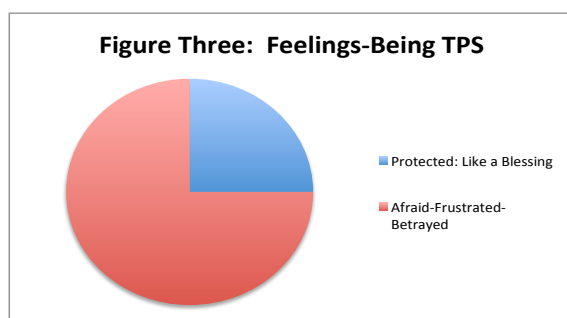
- c. Economic Opportunity: Fifty-one percent (51%) of participants stated that the main reason for migrating to the US had to do with economic reasons. The majority of them left between 1996 and 2000 and were fleeing the poverty left behind after the Central American wars ended in the early 1990s. As they had arrived after the wars, they only became eligible for the program when TPS

changed into a humanitarian program in 1999 and 2001. Participant #009DC, who was 25 years old when he arrived from El Salvador in 1999 exemplified his reasons for leaving El Salvador best: *“Well, I really came here for the same reason as everyone who comes here to the US, looking for the opportunities I didn’t have in our country because when you’re young and you have a family, all you want is to get your family through, right?”*

Independently of the reasons why the participants left their countries of origin, the majority of them arrived without visas, becoming illegal immigrants upon arrival and joining the thousands of Central American refugees who were already in the US and under an undocumented status. Important for this study is the fact that the majority of participants left their countries (and arrived in the US) at their prime working years, searching for opportunities to improve their economic lot in life.

2. Personal expectations: This category identifies instances where TPS holders speak in their own words about what it means to them to be TPS. Three analytical patterns were identified under this concept: (a) Feelings of being TPS, (b) Agency in creating opportunities, and (c) Returning home.

- a. Feelings about being TPS: The majority of participants felt positive about the impact TPS had in their lives, as it gave them the opportunity to get a driver's license, resulting in more mobility to look for better-paid jobs. This category revealed two sub-codes: (i) I feel protected-It's like a blessing, and (ii) I feel afraid, frustrated and traicionada (betrayed). Figure 3 illustrates the findings in this category.



As illustrated in Figure 3, 75% of the participants reported feeling desperate, vulnerable, powerless, and frustrated by the uncertainty of their status and by the lack of opportunity to apply for a permanent solution. They expressed feelings of betrayal, anger at being stuck in limbo, and discontent with a system that did not reward their compliance to the law, their investment in the economy, and their good behavior. Participant #006NJ, a female, stated *“We got the right to stay. But we get nothing for that.”* While Participant #004DC, a male, stated *“TPS labels you as having a limit...I feel*

tagged because my license says when my time expires...that labels you.” For the majority of them, the uncertainty of their status was a huge pressure that consumed them with worry. Participant #014NJ, a male, stated, “It is a constant worry that exhaust you.”

About 25% of participants expressed feeling grateful that they at least had a work-permit that allowed them to drive back and forth to work, and to not be afraid of deportation. Participant #004DC, while expressing frustration, also expressed gratefulness when he stated *“Honestly, it feels like a blessing because it gives us the chance to work legally and to give some degree of stability to our families, compared to people who have no documents and live in fear of being deported, of being even... even exploited for work...”* Another expression of gratitude came from Participant #002NJ when she stated that *“with TPS, you can stand up for yourself.”*

Feelings of gratitude for the ability to be free of the fear of deportation were expressed by the majority of the respondents without any difference in age and/or earning levels. However, feelings of frustration and disappointment were more present among younger TPS holders as they have younger families and children who are

American citizens. Many of them have also spent their formative years in the US rather than their home countries. As stated by Participant #018NJ, a 43-year-old female from Honduras who arrived as a teenager and has a US college degree: *“I feel vulnerable...I have my own business helping people...I am a notary public and I help people open up their own businesses, pay their taxes, fill out their legal papers to become citizens...so I never felt different than other citizens. It was a shock to speak about it...when I spoke in public [at a council meeting] I felt I was vulnerable because I had to tell society, you know what, I am TPS. At that moment it felt like saying—I am illegal. You all know me for years, but you don’t know the truth about me.”*

- b. Agency in creating opportunities: This analytical category identifies instances in which the participant expresses a sense of positivity about their own ability to advance economically, despite the boundaries set by legal status under TPS. Seventy nine percent of the participants expressed that they were better off economically since arriving to the USA. About 66% of them have taken training on different crafts and trades, pursued community college, or took ESL classes to be able to improve their job options.

Figure 4: Agency in Creating Opportunity	
Better off since arrival	79%
Obtained training or higher ed	66%
Feels Stagnant-but Grateful	21%

Participant #009DC, a male who owns a construction management firm, stated that he is grateful he was given the opportunity to open several companies and was able to build economic security and capital for his children who are all DACA beneficiaries: *“I can say I did reach my goals, but there are always things missing in the way to eventually reach them...My company is committed until 2020, so how can I say [the owner] has no TPS...”*

Participant #016NJ, a female who arrived in the US at the age of 15 stated that she feels good about what she has accomplished: *“...I am a manager in a clinical management department, and I feel that yes, I accomplished my dreams...when I came here that was my dream, to have a university degree, and I got it. At least I achieve that.”*

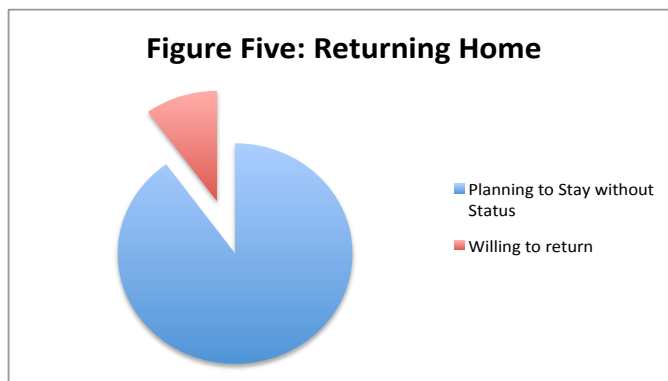
Even those who are working low-wage jobs expressed a sense of accomplishment at being able to work and financially support their families, both here and in their home countries. Overall, despite the

uncertainty of their status, all the participants felt that there were opportunities in the US for all those who want to do the right thing and work hard, and that personally they had accomplished some of their economic goals, by supporting their families even if they currently felt stagnant in their economic mobility. Figure 4 illustrates the findings in this category.

Other subcategories on this theme were:

i. Returning home:

Figure 5 illustrates that the majority of TPS holders expressed unwillingness to return to the home countries, as they had spent more time here in the US than back home. About 90% stated that they will try their luck and go back to illegality rather than leave their children behind or go back to a country they no longer remember or recognize.



Only 10% of participants expressed willingness to return, as they had never been undocumented and couldn't imagine living in the US without a work-permit or a driver's license. Overall, TPS holders who participated in this study were actively engaged in advocacy activities to fight for an extension of TPS so that they would not be forced to return to a country they barely knew.

In addition to feeling more connected to the US, participants expressed fear of being deported back to gang violence and poverty. Participant #017NJ, a male from Honduras stated, *"No, I cannot go back there now. I wouldn't go there willingly...if anything happens to me there, it would be their fault because I have already been threatened there."*

Overall, the participants stated that they would not self-deport and would find a way to stay with their children in the United States, even if it meant a return to an undocumented status.

3. Community Engagement: This category identifies the type of activities the participants engage in with local organizations that encourage their civic

engagement. As stated above, many of them stated their unwillingness to return back to their home countries as the number one reason for their participation in local organizations that were advocating for an extension of TPS.

Since this study was facilitated by leaders of local community organizations, 100% of the participants in the interviews were already engaged at some level with the local group, either as a client for legal services, as a volunteer for the educational and social activities, as members of the local TPS committee, or as contributors with small donations to support the efforts. Overall, those who participated understood that the local organizations who were assisting them with renewals of TPS were also engaged in advocacy to keep the program alive. And hence, their engagement varied from as little as making a small monetary contribution towards the “Save TPS Campaign” to as far as becoming volunteers to organize other TPS holders in the communities. Overall, this group of participants was highly informed and engaged in unconventional political mobilization activities, as they saw it as part of their efforts to build community and find hope among each other. Participant #018NJ a female who is a volunteer organizer of other TPS holders, expressed the following:

"I was very depressed when I was first invited to the community meetings. I had just had a baby and my husband thought hearing people's sad stories would only make me sadder, but listening to other people's stories made me stronger because it gave me hope that working together we could find a solution. We deserve it as TPS. We have been working for two decades to build a better America. I believe in TPS holders. I do. I know them and the US government knows them...they know more about our lives than the lives of other American people. Every six, eighteen months we provide details of any changes in our lives...we have behaved...we have earned a step towards permanent residency."

This feeling of building community and hope was found to be a common theme among all those TPS holders who were actively engaged in advocating for their own status as TPS holders.

Personal Agency under TPS

This concept comprised themes that described their own sense of understanding of their experience and their agency in changing their current reality. The themes clustered in this concept are: (4) societal bonding, (5) transnationalism, and (6) mobilization-social movement activity.

4. Societal bonding: This analytical category identifies instances where TPS holders invest in group bonding through community participation in mutual aid organizations, professional organizations, local government structures, or in political activities to promote local rights for themselves and their children.

- a. Participation in Community Activities: Because this study was facilitated by local community organizations, the participants were already highly engaged in community-building activities. However, as with the largest TPS community, many expressed that they trusted community organizations to keep them informed as to the latest developments on TPS. Many expressed trust in engaging in community activities as long as the local organizations were asking them to do so, as it gave them a sense of hope that something was being done to help their cause. In the words of Participant #010DC, a male from Washington DC, participating in community activities with the local groups gave him “...*hope...like a peace, to know you are doing something about it...gave him faith (esperanza) that something positive would be done by Congress or the Senate for TPS.*”

- b. Political Engagement-Unconventional: This analytical category traces instances of interest in political activities, understanding of

US political dynamics, sense of identification with US political parties, interest in electoral politics, and voting if they had the right to do so. Overall, 82% of the participants expressed knowledge of national politics and stated that, if they had the right to vote, they would vote in national elections for candidates that look favorably upon immigration reform issues. However, very few of them had engaged in local politics on behalf of a candidate for office. There was a high level of interest in national politics, but little knowledge about local elections and local politicians.

- c. Trust in US Government: This analytical category is one of the most relevant to the study of integration as it identifies the level of trust TPS holders have in US government institutions such as courts, local government agencies, and police - as these are the institutions that regulate their everyday lives in the US. The sub-categories in this theme are: (i) I do not trust the US Government, (ii) I do not trust the police, (iii) I trust local government. The results of this category were mixed, as there were equal responses between those who stated they did not trust the federal government because of the current president and those who trusted the police and local courts and city halls based on how they had been personally treated when they had interacted with them. The results of this category are illustrated in Figure 6:

Figure 6: Trust in US Government	
I do not trust the US Government	34%
I trust my local Government-Mayor	24%
I do not trust the Police	13%
I have little interaction w Gov--I obey the law. I stay out of trouble.	68%

The analysis of the findings break-down in the following manner:

- i. I do not trust the US Government: 34% of the participants expressed concerns with the current anti-immigrant environment and stated a lack of trust in the fairness of the current US government. However, those feelings were more directed at the national rhetoric under the current president than at local representatives of local government institutions such as city halls and the courts in the cities they currently reside.
- ii. I do not trust the police: Only 13% percent of participants stated a total lack of trust of the police. As expressed by Participant #003NJ, a 48-year-old female from El Salvador, *"I am traumatized by the police."* She stated that her interactions with the police during a routine traffic stop turned into a nightmare because her driver's license at the time had expired due to her work-permit being late. She spoke about the harassment she felt and the financial burden she suffered

when she was forced to pay hundreds of dollars in fines for driving with an expired license, and then paying for lawyers so she wouldn't be deported even though she could prove that she was authorized to be in the country. Other experiences included overall negative views of police, but not specific instances of negative interactions. However, many were grateful that they had a driver's license and could drive without fear of police harassment.

- iii. I trust local government: Twenty four percent of participants clearly spoke about their positive sense of their interactions with local government entities and officials. Their interactions vary from interacting with local police and local judges to requesting local permits for business and/or construction. This group was able to understand the difference between the federal government and the local government, and evaluated their feelings based in local interactions.

Overall, most participants (68%) stated that since they made a point to stay out of trouble, by obeying the law, they had little interaction with the police or the courts. However, in case of emergencies, they felt that their TPS status gave them a sense of security to interact with government agencies, call the police for help, or report crimes.

5. Transnationalism: This analytical category explores the type of connections TPS holders still have to their home countries. The purpose of this category is to ascertain whether the participant's level of transnationalism was driven solely by familial connections or by a personal interest to stay connected to their country's political dynamics. The sub-categories were: community, political and familial. Figure 7 illustrates the findings in this theme:

Figure 7: Levels of Transnationalism	
Community: Hometown Associations & other charities	24%
Political Interest of home-country elections	48%
* Support of political parties	0%
* Voting in home country elections	0%
Familial Bonds--supports parents, children & grandchildren	85%
* Still sends remittances back home	25%
* Has requested Advanced Parole to visit relatives	12%

The analysis of the data breaks down in the following manner:

- i. Community: About 24% of the participants supported efforts connected to their hometowns or in support of causes they believe in - like helping the Red Cross - or programs through their church. They did it by donating money during community events or by volunteering during fundraising events at church, in their hometown associations or in the community.

- ii. Political: About 48% expressed interest in the politics of their home countries because they wanted to be informed of any political events that impacted their family and friends back home. They also expressed hopes that their countries would change for the better, both economically and socially, as it relates to crime and gangs. Most of their knowledge of current events, however, came from the Spanish news media and from speaking with relatives back home. None of them expressed interest in supporting any political parties back home, nor any efforts in the US to support candidates who came to campaign in the US for support of their electoral campaigns. The results demonstrated that despite high levels of transnationalism, this community is more connected to US electoral and political events than those of their home countries.

- iii. Familial: About 85% of the respondents stated that they still have close family members in their home countries and speak to them daily, weekly, or monthly. About 25% of them still send monthly remittances of an average of \$250 per month. Despite having the ability to request advance parole to travel to visit relatives, many of the participants had not travelled because of fear of not being allowed back in, or

because they no longer felt connected to their relatives back home. Participant #008NJ, a female who arrived at the age of 15 and is currently 35 years old stated, *“I have my grandma there. I have aunts and uncles...but I don’t remember them...”*

Others spoke of not wanting to travel to visit family due to the fear of the gang violence, and in once instance, one participant stated that she had been kidnapped (Participant #017NJ) while visiting her father in Honduras with her 11-year-old American son and having to pay ransom to be released. Expressing fear of return, but still feeling responsibility for her father, she has returned by herself again but refuses to expose her American son to the dangers of visiting Honduras again.

Overall, the majority of the participants engaged in transnationalism at the familial level, as they see it as their duty to stay connected to family and support their children and grandchildren left behind. However, at a societal level, they were more attuned to their US identity and to US cultural and political norms.

6. Mobilization-social movement activity: This category traces instances in which TPS holders purposely engage in group activity to impact better outcomes for their status through social movement mobilization and non-traditional political activity. Fifty eight percent (58%) of the study participants reported attending rallies, lobbying visits to Washington DC, council meetings in local City Councils, visiting members of Congress, joining the “Day of The Immigrant” national strike, and participating in community meetings to advance their cause.

The results of this category are higher than the general population of TPS holders,¹⁵⁴ as many of the participants in the study were recruited at community gatherings where they were already engaged and committed to advocate for themselves in some form or fashion. However, this category is important to analyze as means to understand their own perceptions of the effectiveness of their own agency on demanding rights from the state/government that regulates their daily lives. For example, one of the participants stated that they participated in mobilizations because it gave her hope (Participant #016NJ) that things could change for the best: *“I feel supported. We can talk because we have the same issues so we feel support ...and we feel hope things can change.”*

¹⁵⁴ Menjivar 2017 states that 30% of TPS holders are civically engaged. Her study has a larger and more diverse sample.

The words of a 42-year-old male (Participant #006DC) from Nicaragua provides a critical lens into his understanding of the US political process and how his own agency could make a difference in changing the political dynamics: *“The march is next Saturday, and I’m going there, so I think that makes politicians think. At least, that’s what I’ve seen now at the Congress and all that. Politicians are afraid when you threaten them and tell them... For example, with Rubio, I told Rubio, ‘OK, I’m not a citizen, but my mom, my brother, my sister and my nieces and nephews all are and they vote, and they live in Florida... He just stared at me and just laughed. He knew what I meant.”*

Participant #011DC, a 40-year old male from El Salvador, aptly explained his belief in social justice activism as a way to make the voices of all TPS holders heard when he stated: *“Yes, we’ve seen it, even coming from Americans who support us, and we also have the support of other groups which are not the same as ours, but... For example, right now, the Haitians... They’ve joined us. Sudanese people as well... I mean... It’s not a problem of Salvadorans only. The problem is for all immigrants from different nations.”*

Further understanding of their own belief in self-agency is revealed by a 40-year-old female from Honduras (Participant #012NJ) who, during the interview, stated that she was confident they would get their TPS renewed. When probed by the PI why she was so confident she stated, *“Because we are fighting for it.”*

Sense of Belonging as TPS

This concept comprised themes that described their current feelings of belonging. The themes included here are: (7) ability to plan for future, (8) discrimination as an individual, (9) discrimination as a group, and (10) sense of belonging to US society. For the purposes of the study of integration, this section of the interview revealed the most significant data as it relates to the subjective dimensions of integration. The information gathered focused on the personal sense of belonging to the US as their home and as their country. It also asked questions about their sense of societal bonding to the norms and culture of the US for themselves and their children, and whether they identified themselves as American. This concept also gathered data on whether the sense of frustration from their non-permanence revealed a sense of voluntary non-incorporation (Chebel d’Appollonia 2015) or as this study proposes, a sense of bounded integration that restrains their personal goals every eighteen months. This sense of bounded integration is revealed in the words of Participant #014DC, when he stated: *“I feel tagged by*

the date of expiration on my work permit because it also makes my driver's license expire. It is like a label. TPS labels you as having a limit."

7. Ability to plan for future: This category tracked expressions of insecurity and frustrations about their future, as well as expressions of fear and anger at not being able to plan for their children's future. As many of them had immigrated to the US to improve their lives, the insecurity of not being able to plan for their future so they could secure a better life for their children stood out as the most demanding part of their everyday existence. As stated by Participant #014NJ, a TPS holder who is the father of a minor in the US, worrying about his son's future is the most difficult part of his everyday life; *"the psychological pressure is huge. It is a worry that exhaust you."*

In order to evaluate the pressures of living under a permanent state of temporality, this theme had three sub-themes: (i) hopeful - able to plan for their children's future, (ii) hopeful - able to plan for self, (iii) uncertain — cannot make plans. Figure 8 illustrates the findings in this category.

Figure 8: Ability to Plan Future	
Hopeful: I am able to make plans for my children's future	48%
Hopeful: Planning for self	31%
Uncertain: Cannot make plans	27%

The analysis of the data is as follows:

- i. Hopeful - able to plan for children's future: While the majority felt that the fear of having to leave their children behind was the most stressful and difficult part of their everyday existence, about 48% of the participants felt hopeful in their children's ability to build a future for themselves in the United States. Many stated that they were focusing on giving them an education and putting all their energy into helping them become productive citizens so that if they had to be left behind with a relative or a friend, they could survive. Participant #003NJ states the following when talking about how she is focusing on her children's education as a way to prepare them to survive in case they have to stay alone in this country: *"I have tried to teach values and principles to my children, but above all, I thought them that studying is the foundation for being useful to society and that they can...if they are prepared, if they study, they will have a bright future...they will be useful and will make a contribution to this country."*

Participant #009DC a businessman from Washington DC stated the same hope in his children's ability to succeed. His children, who are all DACA beneficiaries, were already

running his company so that if he was deported back to El Salvador, they knew the business and could run it. Other expressions of hope were expressed by a female mother of two American kids under 21-years-of-age (Participant #003NJ): *“I know they will be able to achieve many things in this country because at least they are away from the violence in my country.”*

- ii. Hopeful - planning for self: Only about 31% of the participants felt some level of security and expressed ability to plan for their future. They felt grateful that TPS allows them better wages so that they could buy a home in better neighborhoods, have savings, and/or invest in a business that was helping them build a future for their children. Despite the current political climate and uncertainty, this group of TPS holders felt hopeful that they would be able to stay longer in the US. As stated by Participant #008NJ TPS holder from El Salvador when asked about his ability to make plans for his future, *“I do feel worried about September 2019. But I also feel optimistic. God willing.”* Another TPS holder, Participant #012NJ stated, *“I am confident we will get it renewed for longer.”*

- iii. Uncertain - Cannot make plans for self: Only 27% of participants stated that they felt unable to make plans and were putting off any major decisions like buying a home, improving their homes, or even signing up for a 401K plan at work. For example, Participant #004DC states that *"It was like a month ago we were offered that [401K plan] but now with the TPS expiration thing...I told them that I decided not to do it because what is the point of me doing it when I do not know what is going to happen."*

Participant #006DC stated: *"Planning for the future, seeing what you want for your future cannot be defined completely because there is so much emotional instability as well as institutional instability, because all I know right now is that my TPS expires in January...after that I don't know anything else..."*

8. Sense of Discrimination - as an individual: This category identified instances in which TPS holders felt personally discriminated against because of their status as TPS, their language, and/or their nationality. Figure 9 illustrates the findings in this category of Discrimination, both as an individual and as part of a group:

Figure 9: Sense of Discrimination		
	Yes	No
Discrimination—as an individual	73%	27%
Discrimination—as a group	65%	35%

Only about 27% of participants stated that they had never felt personally discriminated. Participant #005NJ stated that since she has lived in a mostly Latino city (Union City) for 20 years, most of her interactions are with other Latinos, so she has always been able to communicate and do all that she needed to do in her everyday life. Others expressed that their driver's license gave them a sense of safety in their interactions with police, and as long as they stay out of trouble and follow the law, they were safe and felt treated with respect.

The other 73% of participants expressed instances of discrimination for many reasons including their lack of English fluency, their lack of citizenship papers, and/or misunderstanding from government officials who do not know about TPS and/or work-permits. Personal feelings of discrimination were more prevalent in their interactions at the DMV (Department of Motor Vehicles) upon expiration of their driver's license. Other areas of personal discrimination were because of their nationality, color of their skin, and because they were Hispanic and specifically because they are Central Americans. In a few cases, a couple of participants felt discriminated against by other Hispanics who questioned their inability to get

legalized. For example, Participant #009DC from DC who owns a large construction firm expressed how he had faced personal discrimination from Americans when he started his business but felt he was able to overcome that and keep on going. However, his biggest frustration was at other more established Hispanics who often criticize him for not being able to obtain papers:

“And I started getting attacks like, ‘How come this businessman didn’t get his residence?’ It’s one thing to talk and a different one is to stand on our shoes...Those of us who do not qualify...[is] because we couldn’t find one sponsor, one businessperson to sponsor us...because of 245i. Are there any options? Yes, there are options. Half a million dollars or one million dollars. Both options are available, but you’re never told... you can’t have made your money within the US borders. You need to bring it from another country. If I had half a million dollars from my country, I wouldn’t have migrated in the first place...”

The experience of the TPS holders in this study reveal that most of them felt discriminated against based on their status. The inability to change their reality made them feel frustrated and angry. As explained by Abrego-Lakhani (2015), TPS holders experience levels of structural discrimination by the dominant society because others don’t understand their legal

standing. Hence, they experience similar structural and symbolic forms of violence as experienced by the undocumented. As stated by Participant #016NJ, a female participant from Honduras, *“I feel different than other Latinos...he [Trump] has labeled Central American so badly, I feel discriminated for being Central American.”*

9. Sense of Discrimination — as a group: This category reveals instances in which TPS holders connected their own experiences of discrimination to those of other similarly situated groups in society such as other immigrants, other Latinos, and other minority groups. The feeling of group discrimination also reveals a sense of social bonding to the dynamics of the society in which they already reside because they do not see discrimination as a solely individual experience, but part of the experience of belonging to a minority group within the dominant society.

A 38-year-old male, Participant #004DC, stated the following when asked about his personal experience with discrimination: *“Me siento vulnerable [I feel vulnerable]... I think that by the sheer fact of being Hispanic... Because of the way things are going right now... the hatred has been increasing towards us... towards immigrants.”* Another participant stated similar feelings about feeling discriminated not just for being TPS, but for being an immigrant. In his own words, Participant #014NJ stated:

“If you are an immigrant, you are tagged. If you are a Muslim, you are a terrorist. If you are from Central America, you are from MS-13, un marero [gang member]. If you are Mexican, you are a rapist. It goes on and on...”

Participant #010DC compared his experience to those of other groups such as African- Americans by stating the following:

“Well, because of all the things that have been happening lately, because of what has been happening with authorities and the measures that have been taken against some African Americans leading to their deaths, so many people see that as racism and they’ve been through racism, so... And in our community, it hasn’t happened at the same rate, not as with the African-American community, but it happens...”

This sense of connection to the experiences of racism experienced by the African-American community reveals a sense of understanding of the cultural norms in American society and a willingness to make a connection as a similarly-situated group. Another example of this level of understanding of racial dynamics in US society was given by a female participant from Honduras (Participant # 012NJ) when she stated that she does feel discriminated against:

“... I feel we are discriminated... but maybe we are treated a little better than African-Americans... but I don’t know as sometimes there is even something between us and African-Americans... like competition.”

In addition to acknowledging an understanding of the complexities in race and the differential treatment of African-Americans, some of the participants expressed knowledge of the African-American struggles for civil rights. A 40-year-old female, Participant #16NJ, stated the following when asked if she had anything in common with African-Americans:

“I think they already went through fighting against that [discrimination]. After the civil rights, the country became better at treating people, but I guess now is like going back.”

Another female participant (Participant #012NJ) stated that, indeed, she relates to the African-American experience in the US because of their history of civil rights:

“They fight for their rights, just like we do.”

The experience of group bonding with other similarly-situated groups like African- Americans over a sense of discrimination and a sense of “fighting

for rights” identifies what Chebel d’Appollonia (2015) calls the subjective and cognitive dimension of integration. The cognitive aspects involve self-identification and a collective identity as members of a group, as well as a sense of loyalty to the society in which they reside. Overall, despite their feelings of being discriminated against for being immigrants, they relate their experience to that suffered by others. Instead of expressing resentment, the group portrays a sense of hopefulness that by emulating the struggles for rights of the African-American community, they would also achieve some rights. This finding reveals understanding of the societal dynamics for making rights claims in the US, and a loyalty to the political process of demanding such rights as exemplified by the African-American experience. Participant #018NJ, expresses her faith in the American system of laws when she states the following:

“I hear all kinds of injustices being committed, people who have their spouses deported and so on...and I tell them this is temporary. We need to take a deep breath and wait for this period to be over no matter if it is the next four, or eight...when the Trump administration is over, things will get better. I have total faith in the US system...things will get better...but we got to speak up...to educate other Americans...I am always talking about TPS because many people don’t know about it...”

10. Sense of Belonging to US Society: This category identified participants' expressions of the United States as their home and their country by capturing expressions of loyalty and acculturation to American norms and values. It specifically tracked the instances in which participants identified themselves as Americans or as being torn into two identities. It also included questions regarding their children's sense of belonging. The sub-categories were the following: (i) Children's sense of belonging to US, (ii) One foot in-one foot out, (iii) Feeling American.

Figure 10: Sense of Belonging to the US	
US is my home, my country.	87%
I am forced to have "One Foot Here-One Foot There"	20%
I already feel American	62%
My children feel American**	27%

* Numbers don't add up to 100% because some participants felt the US was their country and also called themselves Americans hence falling on more than one category.

** This total only includes instances where participants mentioned their children's sense of belonging on their own. Interview tool did not include specific question on their kids sense of belonging.

The majority of participants in the study (87%) described the United States as their home. With an average residence in the United States of 21+ years, this group of participants has already spent more than half of their adult life in the United States and described the US as their home country. In her own words, Participant #010NJ, a female from Honduras, described her feelings in the following manner:

“I think I already love it... As my country, yes. I’ve been living in this country for 31 years. I’ve worked every day from Monday to Friday. I’ve had to stand the sun or the cold when it’s time. I’ve made many friends.”

A male TPS holder from DC, Participant #003DC, also relayed the feeling of belonging to the US when he stated:

“From the moment you make a contribution to this country, you feel you’re part of this country, because if you work, you do it to push the economy onwards because, for example, you do one job, on a building, on an apartment, your job doesn’t end there. That apartment is being rented, so the economy is at work, but they just don’t get it. We pay you for your job and that’s it, but that was my contribution to the economy.”

Finally, Participant #015NJ, who arrived as a teenager, explained her sense of belonging in the following manner:

“Most of my life has been spent here, so I feel more from here. I have mutual feelings with the DACA kids, the Dreamers, because it’s like... I came here when I was 14, but I... You know... It was too old when DACA came into place and I didn’t qualify...”

- i. Children Sense of Belonging: This category captured instances in which the TPS holders voluntarily shared how their children felt about belonging to the US. For the majority of the participants, their children were fully bilingual and more in-tune with American culture than that of their home country. However, only about 27% of the participants spoke specifically about their children's sense of belonging vis à vis the fear of being forced to leave them behind or taken with them back to their home countries. Given that the majority of TPS holders do have US-born children,¹⁵⁵ a study focusing on their children's perception of belonging and eventual path to assimilation is a further area of study.

- ii. One foot In-One Foot Out: About 20% of participants expressed feelings of frustration at being allowed to work and contribute to this country, but also being expected to return to their home country when they are old. A female from Honduras, Participant #010NJ, who has lived in the US for 31 years, explained the forced duality in her existence as she recounted how afraid she felt at the notion of having to return back to Honduras:

¹⁵⁵ It is estimated that there are 270,000 US born children of current TPS holders. For more information see <https://www.americanprogress.org/issues/immigration/news/2017/10/20/440400/tps-holders-are-integral-members-of-the-u-s-economy-and-society/>

“Just like when I came here. The sadness I felt for having left my people over there, it would make me feel very sad to now leave my people behind again here [sobs] ..and I ... I do not know if at my age... I could stand such sadness again.”

The expressions in this category reflected a sense of divided identity, a sense of being forced to stay emotionally connected to their home countries even when they felt they already identify the US as their country and their home. In the case of the participant above, she had been able to reunite her family back in the US, and now faced the prospect of family separation again if her TPS was not renewed. The trauma of family separation again forced her to think of herself as not belonging in the US, and not belonging in Honduras. In the words of Participant #001NJ; *“We are forced to have one foot in, and one foot out.”*

- iii. **Feeling American:** Despite having a sense of belonging and calling the US their home and country, only 62% of participants specifically identify themselves as Americans. They felt American because they had adapted to the American way of life and felt that they were following the rules and

laws of the country. As Participant #002DC, a female from DC, stated when asked if she felt American:

“I say yes. It’s been 17 years living in this country. This country gave me opportunities. I love America.... You keep your culture, but culture is a different thing. You have to understand that the culture is different here. What I can say for sure, what I am sure of, is that I have already gotten used to this country.”

Overall, most participants expressed a sense of being American based on their love for the values and norms of American society. For example, Participant # 004DC identified himself as Salvadoran-American, acknowledging his Salvadoran culture but stating that he had already adapted an American identity and its cultural values:

“I think I have come to adapt to the cultures and traditions here and to the way of working here...the way laws are observed, to the freedom you feel here to go to work, to buy your own things, to fight for what you want and see it come to fruition, to see the results...which are all the things we are not able to do in our country.”

Overall, the concept of a “Sense of belonging to the US,” fully captured the subjective dimension of the participants’ integration experienced. Overall, they express a positive sense of their own accomplishments and a sense of belonging to American society. Simultaneously, though their high sense of group and individual discrimination revealed that their integration trajectory was also marked by high levels of frustration with the limits set on them by their TPS status. If they feel American and positive about their own accomplishments, can they also feel discriminated and frustrated with their own reality? It is the contention of this research study that the simple acknowledgement and/or understanding that discrimination - due to ethnic, racial, or immigration status - is indeed part of a larger American experience, reveals that this groups has a nuanced understanding of their own place in American society. TPS holders experience discrimination personally in their daily lives, but they also understand that their struggles are similar to those of other non-white members of society, like African Americans and other immigrants. They also understand that similar groups like them have a history of fighting back to assert their rights. Hence, in relating to others around them, they understand their experience is not unique and is part of a larger societal dynamic. This process of connecting to the larger societal experience around them reveals a heightened level of social bonding to other similarly situated groups in society fighting for a sense of belonging.

As stated by Sassen (2006), citizenship is “both exclusionary and aspirational....and defined at its margins by those claiming their rights and demanding inclusion.” As such, the participants’ understanding of their need to fight for their rights as other groups (i.e. African Americans) have done in the past, reveals a clear sense of acculturation to the societal norms and values of American society. And because they have followed the rules and have invested in the society, they feel that they have a clear demand to make for rights as citizens. As stated by a 40-year-old female, Participant #018NJ from Honduras who arrived as a teenager:

“I dream of becoming an American citizen because this is the land of opportunity, the land of Canaan,...I feel I’ve built this country. I feel I’m a part of it. [Also] It feels as if I am being laughed at...you’re told you’re not a part of this country and you don’t count, so it’s not so much about the fear of going back, because I say to myself, ‘I’ll stay. I’ll stay in the shadows and I’ll stay one way or another,’ but I feel betrayed by this country I love so much ...”

For those immigrants who arrived in the US as children, like Participant #018NJ above, the experience of having a bounded integration trajectory has led to feelings of betrayal and discontent at not being rewarded for following the rules. The majority of this immigrant population does express a sense of betrayal, a feeling of rejection, and a sense of frustration at having spent most of their adult lives

in permanent uncertainty and getting to the end of their productive years and still not being able to permanently set roots in their adopted country. As first-generation immigrants, however, this group still expresses a sense of gratitude for the opportunity to work legally and achieve some of their economic goals. They simultaneously feel gratitude for what they have accomplished and frustration for not being rewarded for their commitment to American values.

This study set out to find out if these feelings of frustration and betrayal, under a framework of subjective integration (Chebel D'Appollonia 2015), had driven this group into a path of limited choices and towards what Portes (1993) calls "segmented assimilation" for themselves and their descendants. The findings outlined above, however, reveal a community that is vulnerable, but hopeful that their current situation will change. By engaging in social movement organizing and participation in non-traditional political mobilization, they are engaged as political agents for their own struggle for rights to belong to American society.

It is also a community that believes they have had a positive impact in the local communities where they reside. Hence, they are certain that they have an argument to make on their sense of belonging and their positive contributions to society. Their compliance with American laws, morals, and values makes them feel

that they are already American and therefore fully deserving of rights to belong to America as citizens.

The hopes of this community were clearly stated by Participant #006DC when he expressed his reasons for fighting for TPS extension;

“We want to live in the US freely... We deserve that chance. We have been living in this country for 20 years. We have a life here. We have integrated into the life system of this country and so that is why I think we deserve full integration, the rights to fully integrate to American life.”

CHAPTER SIX: CONCLUSIONS

*“I feel that I built this country. I feel I am part of it... It feels I’m being laughed at...
you are told you are not part of this country and you don’t count...
I feel betrayed by this country I love so much.”¹⁵⁶*

*

The purpose of this study is to understand the dynamics that influence the integration process of TPS holders and to explore the impact that their in-between status has had on their own sense of belonging to American society. In order to add new knowledge to the theoretical evaluation of integration and eventual assimilation outcomes for non-European immigrants to the US, this study applies a second dimension in the evaluation of assimilation outcomes: subjective integration (Chebel d’Appollonia 2015). This second dimension evaluates the individual perception of their own experiences, and if regardless of their lack of access to citizenship rights, the group still holds on to a positive view of their own life in the United States. The evaluation of subjective integration provides an important new framework of theoretical analysis to advance the scientific study of assimilation of newer non-European immigrants who lack access to citizenship rights.

This chapter outlines the conclusions to the key research questions based on the data analysis and the findings included in Chapter Five. This section also

¹⁵⁶ Study Participant #018NJ

includes key conclusions, general conclusions, policy recommendations, and recommended areas of further study.

Conclusions related to research questions

This study evaluates the impact of TPS status on the group's integration experience by analyzing and grouping the findings of the field research into themes that generate an overall framework of analysis. This framework guided the process of reaching key conclusions and recommendations based on the key research questions of the study.

Findings on Traditional Measurements of Integration

The first research question sought to determine aspects of the participants' integration experience that stand out as specific to those immigrants with TPS. One of the known positive outcomes of TPS status is that access to a work permit gives these immigrants a higher sense of security than the undocumented because it removes the insecurity of deportation from their daily lives. It also gives these workers the ability to look for better work options improving in that manner their earnings and social mobility. The demographic data gathered in the study revealed that this population is indeed economically better-off than the undocumented population. However, despite having a work-permit, the group is not experiencing social mobility or parity-of-earnings in par with other legal immigrants (Waters & Jimenez 2005). The average annual

earnings of TPS holders in this study was just above that of the undocumented at \$43K per year, compared to \$36K for the undocumented. The differential was even smaller when compared by locality; TPS holders in NJ were earning on average \$37K, which is just \$1K above the undocumented. In comparison, TPS holders in the DC area were earning an average of \$49K, with some business owners having higher income and tilting the average higher. Nevertheless, higher earnings were more prevalent for those TPS holders who were younger at time of arrival and attended formal schooling, craft and vocational training in the US. The difference in earning differentials among localities was not a focus area of this study, but a worthy area of further research.

Another significant finding that demonstrates a better socio-economic outcome for this population than that of the undocumented is their level of home ownership which stands at 27%, demonstrating embeddedness to their local communities. The majority of TPS holders in this study expressed frustration at not being able to invest in a home as the uncertainty of their status prevented them from buying any type of property and engaging in wealth-building activities like a 401K.

Additionally, this group of TPS holders demonstrated a higher than usual level of entrepreneurial activity; twenty-four percent (24%) of the members of the group were engaged in significant levels of entrepreneurship as owners of

firms in the cleaning and construction business. However, despite feeling a high sense of personal accomplishments, these TPS holders' express frustration that they couldn't turn their economic success into a path towards permanence.

Participant #009DC, an owner of a large construction firm in Washington DC, expressed his personal satisfaction with his economic success and the ability TPS gave his company to work on large construction projects in the DC area. However, at the same time, he expressed frustration that despite having achieved economic success he couldn't translate his economic gains into a path to emotional stability for himself and his children:

"TPS allowed me to work legally...to build my company. Because I had a social security number, I got to do work at the US Capitol, we've got to rebuild The Pentagon...we did construction in so many federal buildings around here...that is my benefit...and the company that I already signed over to my three children. They are also DACA recipients so is also uncertain too. We'll run it as long as we can or we will have to sell it. I don't know..."

These findings on traditional measurements of integration reveal that while TPS holders have a higher level of security in their everyday lives, their economic mobility is just above that of their undocumented. They are limited,

experiencing a bounded existence, in their ability to engage in wealth building endeavors that could eventually improve the SES outcomes for their children and themselves in old age. Even those who have achieved success in business enterprises also experience blocked mobility. While current earnings, home ownership and entrepreneurship are good indicators of a favorable starting position vis a vis the undocumented, these findings reveal that the majority of participants still experience frustration with the limitations their status imposes in their ability to achieve long term economic goals for their families.

As explained by Waters & Jimenez (2005), in addition to economic mobility, traditional measures of integration also evaluate other areas of integration such as level of residential segregation & dispersion, language acquisition, intermarriage and the replenishing of co-nationals (i.e. newer wave of immigrants) continuing the demand of resources from those already settled in the new country. While specific quantitative data is difficult to track for this population, this research study revealed initial findings addressing three of the areas mentioned by Water & Jimenez:

- On residential segregation and dispersion: TPS holders in the NJ and DC areas mostly live in urban areas. Doing so makes it easier for them to travel to work, to use public transportation and to find affordable rental

housing. It also facilitates their everyday interactions with banks, schools, supermarkets, etc. The areas in NJ where the TPS holders in the study resided were Union City, Jersey City, Newark, Elizabeth, and Morristown. The cities listed above are considered friendly to immigrants and some had approved different versions of sanctuary city resolutions and the states of NY and NJ both call themselves welcoming states for immigrants.¹⁵⁷ Home ownership for this group was 27%, with most of them residing within the metropolitan areas of both population hubs in order to facilitate their engagement with their ethnic community, their family and friends.

For the Washington DC area, the majority of TPS holders resided within the boundaries of the city and within the metropolitan area, i.e. Silver Spring and Northern VA. These areas are close to public transportation with affordable housing options being more prevalent within the boundaries of the DC Metro area. The majority of TPS respondents in the study, however, resided within the boundaries of the city of Washington DC, a place that is also designated as a Sanctuary City.¹⁵⁸

¹⁵⁷ https://www.nj.com/essex/2017/10/what_are_sanctuary_cities_and_what_do_they_mean_fo.html

¹⁵⁸ <https://dcist.com/story/17/01/25/mayor-bowser-1/>

- On English acquisition: Language acquisition was high, as most of them had lived and work in the US for an average of 21 years. The majority of the participants revealed competency in communicating in English at work and in their everyday interactions in their communities. Those who had arrived as children or in their early 20s had a higher level of competency, and only those educated in the US were fully bilingual (about 10% of participants were in this category). About 48% of the participants stated they had either attended high-school, attended community college, earned some sort of university degree, taken classes at technical schools or joined an apprenticeship program for construction trades like carpentry, cooking or cosmetology.
- On level of intermarriage: The level of intermarriage with other groups was low, as many of TPS participants are married to people from the same countries, and/or other Latinos who are also immigrants themselves. Overall, 86% reported being married with someone who was in some sort of irregular immigration status (i.e. other TPS, DACA, undocumented or some type of limited visa). Only 13% of the study participants reported being married to an American Citizen or a Permanent Residency of their own ethnic background. See Table 12 for more details.
- On renewal of co-nationals: The majority of participants expressed knowledge of other people from their hometowns arriving into their cities and neighborhoods. However, most of them were already supporting their

immediate family both here and in their hometowns, and hence invested their limited resources on helping their own family members. Besides general awareness of continued migration from their home countries, the research tool did not ask specific questions on level of additional engagement on issues of migration from the region. As such, conclusions on this area are limited.

In conclusion, the findings relevant to the evaluation of traditional measurements of integration, reside mostly around this groups' higher earning capacity than the undocumented, their higher level of English fluency and educational attainment, and their level of home ownership in the cities where they reside. Because their TPS status expires every 18 months, many of the participants felt that their personal success was truncated by the expiration of their TPS. Henceforth, TPS holders are experiencing what this study describes a Bounded Integration experience. This feeling of bounded integration is aptly expressed by a female TPS holder from Honduras who arrived to the US as a minor, attended High School, completed University and was employed as an executive at a pharmaceutical company (Participant #016NJ):

"I feel that I was given wings, and now they have been cut...After giving me opportunities, they are taking them away from me."

Since quantitative SES data for this TPS community is difficult to obtain, this qualitative study provides a useful snapshot of the experience of the group in two major hubs of TPS settlement. The findings of this study reveal that, despite the limits of their economic mobility and their frustration with the bounded trajectory of their lives, this group of TPS holders feels positive about their own economic achievements. They also feel grateful that they have been given the opportunity to work legally and provide a better life for their families both here and in their home countries. They also feel confident and hopeful that their children will have a better future here than if they had stayed behind. Hence, participants on this study hold a positive view of their own trajectory of economic integration into US society.

Findings on Actors Doing the Job of Integration

Since the moment of their arrival, the Central American population currently under TPS relied on local and religious community organizations created by compatriots and allies to advocate for their economic survival and their legal protection. The groups that were organized to defend the asylum claims of the first wave of refugees in the early 80s-90s, and with the exception of a few new ones, continue since the early 2000s to be the ones advocating for their permanent legalization. The findings in this study show that the majority of TPS holders reported high levels of engagement in the activities led by these local community organizations. As in the past, these local groups are affiliated

to national networks like the National TPS Alliance, a brand-new coalition of local TPS Committees, that are directly engaged in the advocacy for TPS renewal and permanency for this group. See Appendix Six for the list of all the organizations that assisted in the field research for this study.¹⁵⁹

Local groups like Casa MD, CARECEN-DC or Centro Comunitario-CEUS, serve as a hub for community and social justice organizing and for basic education options such as English as a Second Language or know-your tenant-rights trainings. Wings of the Spirit in NJ-NY metro area also engage in labor-rights organizing and assist TPS holders in case of workplace issues and complaints.

Given the lack of a formal process of integration, the organizations mentioned here have become the hubs of integration learning for this community. As explained by the leader of CARECEN-DC, in addition to doing basic immigration rights advocacy, they are also engaged in housing, education and economic development issues and plan to also spend more resources in educating the younger US-born Central American population in the importance of voting and

¹⁵⁹ The organizations that aided in conducting this field research are for the most part the same ones that historically have been advocating for this community. In DC those organizations were CARECEN DC and CASA MD. In New Jersey, those groups were Centro Comunitario CEUS (formerly Centro Salvadoreño), American Friends Service Committee and Winds of the Spirit. These groups have taken the lead in organizing local TPS Committees who are associated with the National TPS Alliance, a national coalition now advocating for renewal of all the TPS designations and for a path to permanent residency for all TPS holders.

running for office.¹⁶⁰ In NJ, Centro Comunitario-CEUS, organizes a Women's Leadership Training Academy to train women to become leaders and entrepreneurs and teach activist the nuts and bolts of coalition work with other immigrant rights groups to advocate for better government policies for their members.¹⁶¹ Depending on the type of programs offered, some of these groups receive limited government funding, but most of them rely solely on member fees, contributions and private foundation grants. Since members of this community are resource poor, the level of member contributions is still very small. However, as explained by one of the leaders of CEUS in NJ,¹⁶² the significance of the member contribution lies in the experience of TPS holders, themselves, understanding that they must invest their own resources and time in the struggle to demand rights. In response to this call for self-investment in achieving rights, leaders of the TPS Committees often organize events to raise funds for their trips to lobby in WDC or to send members to national gatherings. They organize community dinners with their native foods, hold raffles, host music festivals and contribute their own money to the campaign to "Save TPS" lead by the National TPS Alliance.

Despite discussions on level of commitment to advocacy on behalf this community, one limitation of the study is that the field research tool was not

¹⁶⁰ PI field research notes. Discussion with Abel Nunez, Executive Director of CARECEN-DC on February 1st, 2018.

¹⁶¹ PI field research note: Discussion with Blanca Molina, Executive Director of Centro Comunitario CEUS on June 1st, 2017.

¹⁶² Discussion with Blanca Molina, Executive Director of Centro Comunitario, CEUS. PI field research notes for Fall 2016.

designed to seek input from local leaders in their perceptions of the integration path for this community or their views of their role in the process. As such, conclusions in this area limited because they are gathered from the Pls own interactions with the local leaders. As the Central American population in the US continues to grow, further research on the effectiveness of resource mobilization for these community groups should become an essential area of future study.

Findings on Levels of Transnationalism:

The majority of the participants in the study (85%) reported still having close family members back home and providing for them economically. Additionally, about 24% of them reported participating in hometown associations or supporting community-level programs through their church as a way to improve conditions in the communities they left behind. Nevertheless, despite this high level of connection to their family and community, very few of them were interested in the political dynamics or electoral politics of their home countries. Although 48% of them stated that they followed political news in their home countries via Spanish television, none of them expressed any interest in supporting political candidates that visit their area or are running for office in their home countries. In the case of Salvadorans who now have the right to vote abroad in their country

national elections, zero percent of them (0%) expressed interest in voting in the Salvadoran elections for President.

At the same time that they expressed little interest in the politics of their home countries, they did express high concern and knowledge of US-based electoral politics. The majority of them expressed interest in staying up-to-date in US politics, and they were aware that national elections have implications to them personally as they define who is elected and who can vote to approve policies that benefit the immigrant population. In short, the findings in this study reveal that this group of TPS holders was engaged in internationalism at the personal level but was not inclined to get involved in the political affairs of their home countries. At the societal level, this group is more attuned to their US identity and to the US cultural and political norms.

As Joppke and Morawska (2003) argue, internationalism does not preclude the integration process from taking place, and as time passes, does not impede full integration for their younger children and US born offspring. The findings of the study reveal that, for this group of TPS holders, forced transnationalism has not truncated or limited their integration into US society. As we will see next, this group does indeed see the US as

their country and their home and are looking for opportunities to formally belong to the polity in the US. Additionally, 24% of the participants stated that their children as well, are already less likely to identify with the culture and social dynamics of their parents' home countries and that they are more connected to their American identity. The research tool did not allow for questions to expand to their children's self-identification of belonging, as such this limited result are just expressions of the parents' views of their children social identification.

Findings on Subjective Integration:

The findings in this research study reveal that the majority of the participants in the study report a positive sense of their own sense of belonging to American society. Eighty-seven percent (87%) described the US as their home, and despite reporting higher levels of personal and group discrimination both personally and as part of a group, they still expressed a positive sense of belonging and gratitude for being given the opportunity to achieve their own personal economic goals.

Nevertheless, a significant percentage of the study participants (34%) expressed distrust of the current US government, specifically of the US President. Critical for the integration of this community at the local level

however, is their avoidance of any interactions with local law enforcement officials; sixty-seven (67%) of the study participants stated that they purposely avoid any interactions with police and were careful to stay out of trouble to avoid having to deal with local enforcement agents. A significant number of them, 13% stated they do not trust the police at all due to past negative interactions, but that if they were in trouble, they felt that they were better positioned to engage the police for help compared to their fellow undocumented neighbors.

Sixty-five (65%) percent of participants felt that their own experience of discrimination by the dominant society was similar to that experienced by other similarly situated groups (i.e. other immigrant, Latinos and other minority groups like African Americans). This feeling of “commonality in discrimination” reveals a sense of societal bonding because it acknowledges an understanding that discrimination - due to ethnic, racial, or immigration status - is indeed part of a larger American experience for all minority groups within a dominant society. It also demonstrates that this group has acquired a nuanced understanding of norm-making and societal transformation in the American political process.

As stated by Sassen 2006, citizenship is *“both exclusionary and aspirational....and defined at its margins by those claiming their rights and demanding inclusion.”* By claiming and demanding acceptance and inclusion, this group of TPS holders, like the DREAMERS before them, is attempting to redefine who is allowed to belong permanently in US society. By engaging in unconventional political mobilization (i.e. lobbying, rallies, passing resolutions in local cities, etc) via social movement activism, the group is attempting to reframe the American polity’s perception of their right-to-stay as a humanitarian gift and transform it into a permanent right-to-belong.

Their challenge moving forward is to convince the American polity that their compliance with American laws and alignment with American values in their everyday lives, makes them duly deserving of rights to belong as citizens of the country they love and call their home.

Other Findings

As the findings of the study reveal, this population holds a positive sense of their own integration and a heightened sense of belonging to American society. Some other key findings in the study include:

- TPS holders' labor force participation stands at 95%, with the majority of TPS holders working more than one job. Similar to recent findings, the labor force participation of TPS holders in this study is higher than that of the general population (which stands at 62.9%).
- The level of entrepreneurship for TPS holders in this study stands at 24%, a significant higher number than the general TPS population in other areas of the country. This number is also significant because this population often lack access to investment capital for entrepreneurial activities. Entrepreneurial activity has expanded in small to medium size businesses in the industries where the population is currently employed such as home-cleaning companies, landscaping, truck-driving operations and construction management enterprises.
- The majority of TPS holders in the study (90%) expressed unwillingness to return to their home countries as they had spent most of their adult working lives in the US. They stated that they will try their luck and go back to illegality rather than leave their children behind or go back to a country they no longer remember, recognize or belong.
- Sixty-five percent (65%) of the study participants have US born children, with 34% of them having kids who are either DACA beneficiaries or TPS

holders themselves. Only 17% of them have children who are undocumented.

- Seventy-three (73%) percent of participants expressed a sense of feeling personally discriminated for reasons such as the lack of citizenship papers, misunderstandings from government officials who do not know anything about TPS and/or work-permits, and from employers who do not understand TPS extensions and regulations. Personal feelings of discrimination were more prevalent in their interactions at the DMV (Department of Motor Vehicles) or with police upon expiration of their driver's license. Other areas of personal discrimination were due to limited fluency in English, their skin-color, or specifically since the election of President Trump, for being Central Americans.

General Conclusions

The overall findings in the study revealed a community with a positive sense of their own integration. As Chebel d'Appollonia (2015) explains, positive self-perceptions and self-identification, as well as a sense of positive self-mobility, lead to high levels of social bonding, organizational membership, and attachment to a common identity. The majority of the participants in this study expressed a sense of accomplishment in their personal lives. Even when they expressed frustration at not being able to make future plans for themselves and their children, they still

expressed hope that what they have been able to accomplish so far would help their children do better than they could ever had done in their home countries.

This personal sense of self-mobility infuses a sense of positivity in personal outcomes, even after living in uncertainty for the last 21+ years. However, as this population ages and is no longer able to provide for itself by working, the economic burden that it will bring to their children and society has the potential to erase any of the positivity felt during their working years. Studying the implications of aging in the current TPS population is a needed area of further research.

As illustrated in Figure 10 below, the overall findings of this study reveal that current TPS holders are integrated into their local communities and have a sense of belonging to US cultural norms and values. They consider the US their home and are committed to continue to demand a right to belong; sixty-two percent (62%) specifically stated they were Americans as they felt more connected to American values, rules and regulations than those of the countries they left behind.

Figure 10: Sense of Belonging to the US	
US is my home, my country.	87%
I am forced to have "One Foot Here-One Foot There"	20%
I already feel American	62%
My children feel American**	27%

* Numbers don't add up to 100% because some participants felt the US was their country and also called themselves Americans hence falling on more than one category.

** This total only includes instances where participants mentioned their children's sense of belonging on their own. Interview tool did not include specific question on their kids sense of belonging.

The data gathered above includes the experiences of a few TPS holders who arrived as children. However, the main thrust of this study focuses on the experiences of TPS holders themselves, not that of their children. Hence, while the results of this research study revealed TPS holders hold a positive sense of their own integration, the same cannot be generalized for the sense of belonging of their US-born children. Recent findings on the assimilation outcomes of immigrants reveal that first-generation immigrants often express feelings of contentment with what they are able to accomplish in the US because they compare what they have with what they left behind. Those who arrive as children and the second generation, on the other hand, experience higher levels of discontent and resentment because they compare their status and prospects for economic advancement to those of other Americans, not to that of their parents' lives in the old country.¹⁶³

In the evaluation of integration processes for immigrants, the consequences of high expectations and few opportunities in the lives of the children of immigrants becomes an essential factor in evaluating successful assimilation outcomes for any new immigrant group. As stated by Peter Skerry¹⁶⁴ the real challenge to US society in creating integration/incorporation regimes, arises not with the relative

¹⁶³ Allen, James P. "How Successful Are Recent Immigrants to the United States and Their Children?" *Yearbook of the Association of Pacific Coast Geographers*, vol. 68, 2006, pp. 9–32. *JSTOR*, www.jstor.org/stable/24041434.

¹⁶⁴ Peter Skerry. The Brookings Institute. <https://www.brookings.edu/articles/do-we-really-want-immigrants-to-assimilate/>

contentment of the first generation of immigrants, but with the unmet expectations of the second and third generations who, for all intents and purposes, consider themselves Americans and compare their level of opportunities to other Americans, not to that of their immigrant parents.

Known as the paradox of integration, research shows that - driven by higher expectations as Americans - second generation immigrants are less willing to accept lower levels of economic opportunity with little likelihood of upward mobility. As they become more acculturated to American society, children of immigrants take on some of the norms of American children who expect higher levels of socio-economic mobility. Any increase in the possibility of stagnation or prevalent instances of discrimination can lead into retreatism to poorly resourced ethnic enclaves that can further increase poverty outcomes for the second and third generation of their descendants.¹⁶⁵

In a recent study of first generation immigrants who arrived in the 1990s in Southern Florida and Southern California, it was found that - while the majority of the second generation has overall positive economic mobility given the support of their immigrant parents - a significant number of them are caught in a cycle of poverty and discrimination similar to those faced by other American working

¹⁶⁵ Allen, James P. "How Successful Are Recent Immigrants to the United States and Their Children?" *Yearbook of the Association of Pacific Coast Geographers*, vol. 68, 2006, pp. 9-32. *JSTOR*, www.jstor.org/stable/24041434.

poor.¹⁶⁶ As such, the long-term implications of limited economic mobility for TPS holders will not be seen right away, and it will only reveal itself in the life trajectory of the second or third generation of the children of TPS holders.

The majority of TPS holders are the parents of more than 279,200¹⁶⁷ US-born children who are currently under the age of 18 and who are, therefore, totally dependent on their parents for their current and future economic and social welfare. The threat of family separation forces these children to live in a state of psychological trauma that limits their ability to successfully adapt to societal and educational expectations that could help them achieve economic and societal mobility in their lives. Currently, several lawsuits have been filed by the children of TPS holders claiming discrimination as Americans by the US government in forcing them to choose between potentially separating from their parents or being forced to leave their country of birth to follow their parents.¹⁶⁸ These lawsuits have elevated the stories of TPS families as a community that is part of America and can no longer be easily ignored by the American polity. Therefore, further study on the impact of temporality on the assimilation trajectories of their children's lives is a worthy area of further research.

¹⁶⁶ <https://www.migrationpolicy.org/article/second-generation-early-adulthood-new-findings-children-immigrants-longitudinal-study>

¹⁶⁷ <https://www.americanprogress.org/issues/immigration/reports/2019/02/11/466022/ending-tps-will-hurt-u-s-citizen-children/>

¹⁶⁸ <https://www.pri.org/stories/2019-01-11/california-teen-leads-lawsuit-keep-hundreds-thousands-immigrants-us>

Finally, as demonstrated by the DREAMER's struggle for rights, a claim to belong must be demonstrated with a clear narrative of adherence to American values and traditions. TPS holders are currently engaged in a process of social contention trying to redefine their existence in the US from temporary into one of legal permanence. Their challenge is to transform their narrative from one of outsiders in need of humanitarian relief, to one of insiders demanding complete rights as citizens. In order to achieve this level of transformation, they must figure out how to transform their personal adherence to American norms and values into a credible story of group congruence and belonging as Americans.

Policy Recommendations

This research project explores the subjective dimension of TPS integration in the hopes of providing critical data to inform policy makers as they continue to debate immigration policies at the federal and local level. Subjective integration, as a theoretical dimension of the study of individual integration, sets a worthy area of study that analysis how local regimes of exclusion or inclusion can impede or facilitate a positive or negative starting track for group integration. The success of the first generation in achieving economic mobility sets the stage for the next generation to experience positive assimilation outcomes. Continuing to limit the number of immigrants who have access to citizenship rights have consequences in how different groups experience this initial sense of personal integration, with

effects expanding onto a wider sense of societal cohesiveness and a common American identity.

Cohesiveness in society and a common allegiance to “E pluribus unum”¹⁶⁹ can only be achieved when all those who arrive at our American borders have access to the same rights and responsibilities that every member of the community has received before them. Decades of denial of those same rights to millions of workers and immigrants, has implications beyond the individual experience. The existence of a large group of people without rights weakens societal standards of rights adherence for all and impacts the common welfare of all citizens within the polity.

Henceforth, the goal of this research study is to reignite the discussion of access to citizenships rights for immigrants under TPS as a societal good. Those without rights exist in communities with the implicit acceptance by community members that their labor positively contributes to society’s economic wellbeing. Under cosmopolitan theory, society’s acceptance of a person’s existence among the polity grants them a right to demand the creation of a formal process to request access to all the rights and responsibilities of belonging.

¹⁶⁹ *E pluribus unum* --out of many, one

The more than 260,000 TPS holders of Central American descent, plus the thousands of others from other nationalities currently under the program, have invested their lives proving their worthiness of belonging as citizens; they are complying with American rules & regulations by working hard, paying their taxes and educating their children. They have adopted the norms and values of American society and consider themselves for all intents and purposes members of American society.

Hence, based on the findings of this study, the following policy recommendations are made:

1. Develop a process for TPS holders to access citizenship rights:

Congress should recognize that after 21+ years of living and working in the US, TPS holders consider the US their home and have become full members of American society. They have proven their adherence to American norms and values and hence Congress should grant them a clear path to citizenship.

2. Stop the use of temporal legal regimes as a policy solution for illegality:

Recognize the impact that temporality has on the future societal integration of all those who hold the status (i.e. also all DACA beneficiaries) and their children. Temporality impacts societal cohesiveness as it decreases social mobility and future assimilation outcomes for the

children of those under any form of temporal status without a path to citizenship.

3. *Create formal integration regimes for those under temporality:*

Formal integration programs that give TPS holders access to local and federal resources for human capital development like training, education and access to capital for economic entrepreneurial activity, can improve the economic and social mobility of this population.

4. *Retroactively grant access to retirements benefits to all TPS holders:*

Opening up access to social-safety networks like Medicaid, Medicare and Social Security, and other social welfare programs for themselves and their children, will improve the social wellness of this population as it ages and becomes less able to be fully employed.

Policy recommendations that impact immigrants other than current TPS holders are beyond the scope of this study. However, by understanding the impact of temporality in this group integration experience and by examining the potential outcomes for the entire group, policy makers can better understand the impact of the current policy of societal exclusion for immigrants of non-European descent.

Limitations of this Research

The limitations of the study are inherent in the nature of qualitative research; the ability to extrapolate the results is limited by the number of responses to research tool, and to the place and location of the study. However, qualitative findings are useful in providing a picture of the group's sense of belonging in a pre-determined location of settlement and time. It also provides a road map for future research on the subject of non-European ethnic migration to the United States.

This researched focused on the TPS experience in the second and third population hubs of Central Americans. Further comparisons on the sense of belonging for the Central American population in Los Angeles, the largest hub of Central American settlement, is needed in order to make broader conclusions.

Additionally, this research study focused its analysis on members of the TPS community that were connected to local networks of activism. The sample was not random, and hence the results are skewed towards those members of the community who were more engaged in social movement activism. Hence, to make broader conclusions, a study that includes a random sample of TPS holders could be more useful to be able to extrapolate findings into a larger framework of analysis and societal impact. Nevertheless, as explained earlier, ethnographic qualitative studies provide a critical prism by which to observe a specific

societal dynamic. As such, these findings reveal a snap-shot of a community that is highly active and demanding integration regimes that facilitate their socio-economic mobility and eventual group assimilation in the communities they settled.

Future Research Agenda

The findings of this research add critical data to the immigration reform debate and on the expansion of temporary immigration regimes that could increase the universe of those without rights and full membership in American society. This study hopes to contribute to the evolving political and academic debate on integration and assimilation policy for non-European immigrants as they continue to arrive at the borders of the United States.

The history of discrimination on immigration policy application against Central American immigrants, has impacted how this population is able to defend and demand integration regimes for their co-nationals who today continue to seek political asylum. Central Americans have become the third largest group of Latinos in the US today, and as such, their experience in navigating informal integration regimes is an important area of academic study that requires constant updating. Therefore, other areas of future research of this population American experience should include:

1. Evaluation of the subjective integration of the children of TPS holders.
2. Further tracking and evaluation of the objective measurements of integration of the total Central American population as determined by SES and traditional POS.
3. The implications of aging in the current TPS population's ability to remain fully employed and the potential economic impact to their families as they enter old age and lack access to social benefits such as Medicare, Medicaid and Social Security.
4. The level of capital accumulation for the non-profit and social justice sector that aides the integration and political activism of this community. Further tracking of the trajectory of leadership for this community is essential for understanding their path towards rights demands and integration of current flow of immigrants.
5. The potential growth of political levers of power for this communities in key areas of settlement like Los Angeles, CA.
6. The impact of the current anti-Central American narrative from the Trump Administration on US society's acceptance or rejection of this community in their local communities.

Like any other population that is facing exponential growth, studying the evolution of the demand for rights of the Central American community is an essential area of study to successfully track emergent immigrant integration regimes. As such, the areas of future research are endless and necessary in advancing social science research in how to maintain and advance integration and societal cohesiveness.

Redefining the process by which non-Europeans get access to citizenship rights has become an intractable dilemma for policy makers in our political system. As such, exploring the implication to American society of a growing number of people without rights within its polity will continue to be a subject of much needed academic study. The US is becoming a majority-minority country, with immigration driving the growth in new members of our workforce and society. How our society defines who has access to rights and who can enter the US political society as full citizens will determine whether the US will continue to serve as the example of a successful diverse society that creates opportunity to all those who work hard to achieve it.

In the end, the American Dream or the belief in America as the land of opportunity can only be perpetuated when the all those within the society have the

same rights and the same opportunities. Today millions within the borders of the US do not have the rights or the same opportunities European migrants did before them. Hence, advancing critical research on the impact of formal exclusionary regimes like TPS programs on American society is a critical academic endeavor in the study of societal cohesiveness and the belief in the American ethos of "*e pluribus unum*."

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APPENDIX ONE
NVivo Code Book
*

TPS-Integration Research

Name	Description	Files	References
Ability to plan for future	IDs instances where TPS holders express insecurity and frustration about their future & express same for their children.	19	32
Hopeful-Planning for ALL their kids's future		14	24
Planning for their American children's future		10	25
Hopeful-Planning for Self		9	9
Uncertain--Cannot Plan for Self		8	11
Community Engagement	IDs the type of activities TPS holders participate in & the orgs that encourages their civic engagement.	1	1
Activities	IDs the type of activities TPS holders participate on w local orgs	14	19
Organizations	IDs the type of organizations & leaders that aid TPS holders integration into local communities	18	28
Context of arrival-reasons for coming to US	IDs reasons for immigrating to US and the regulatory framework that received them.	1	1
Family Reunification	Reuniting with partners, spouses or parents.	6	10
Search of Economic Opp	Reason for migration was economic pull	15	17

Name	Description	Files	References
War & Natural Disasters	IDs TPS holders understanding of their own status and reasons for it	5	12
Fleeing War	IDs arrivals in early 80s who went thru asylum process, NACARA, ABC process & are now under TPS	3	7
Natural Disasters	Received TPS because of natural disasters.	2	2
Discrimination--as a group	IDs TPS holders experience with discrimination as a member of a group & connects its to other similarly situated groups (I.e.: undocumented, Latinos, African Americans, etc.)	19	51
Discrimination--as an individual	IDs instances in which the TPS holder has felt personally discriminated against because of status, language, nationality, etc.	22	49
No Discrimination for Self	Doesn't feel discriminated personally.	8	9
Mobilization-Social Movement Activity	Traces instances in which TPS holders engage in group activity to impact better outcomes for their group's status through social movement mobilization & non-traditional political activity	17	59
Personal Expectations	Identifies instances where the TPS holders speaks about his/her personal sense of being TPS.	3	3
Agency-I create my own opps	IDs instances of self-motivation to advance economically & socially despite boundaries set by TPS legal status.	23	79
Being TPS	Tracks statements that reflect an identity as TPS that is different than others; instances where status impacts daily lives and defines their otherness.	29	144
Afraid-Traicionada-Frustrada	Feelings of despair, anger, frustration, limitations, fear.	22	27

Name	Description	Files	References
I feel protected- It's like a blessing	Expressions of feeling safe to drive, to work.	16	26
Returning home	Track statements that reflect their intention to stay or return to home country	20	38
Planning to return	Those who are planning to return willingly if TPS is not renewed.	3	4
Sense of belonging to US	IDs TPS holders sense of US as their home, their country. Captures expressions of loyalty to American norms and values.	24	48
Children's Sense of belonging to US	IDs instances of children, American & non-American, sense of US as their country.	8	14
Feeling American	IDs instances where TPS holders call themselves Americans	18	31
One Foot In-One Foot Out	IDs split sense of belonging; US is home but is reminded to go back home	6	15
Societal bonding	IDs instances where TPS holders invest in group bonding through community participation in mutual aid orgs, local government & or engages in political activities.	6	9
Participating in community activities	Tracks reasons why they participate in community, internal and external	12	17
Aiding other immigrants	Traces instances where TPS holders facilitate integration for family members & friends from homeland	4	4
Political engagement-unconventional	Traces level of interests in political activities, sense of self-identification w US political parties, and interest in unconventional engagement.	24	59
Trust in US Government	IDs sense of trust in local institutions like police, courts and local government.	20	44

Name	Description	Files	References
I do not trust Govt righth now	Expressions of fear at current political rhetoric against immigrants	10	11
I do not trust The Police	Specific statements expressing trust of police in local communities	4	8
I trust local Local Govt	Instances that express comfort in relating to local government entities	7	8
Transnationalism-Connection to home country	Explores the type of connections TPS holders still hold; familial, political, community related, etc.	0	0
Community	Through hometown associations or other international organizations	7	15
Familial	Traces the type of family still left behind: kids, parents and or siblings and their level of connection via remittances.	25	46
Political	Traces instances of participation in political activities related to elections back in their home country.	14	22

APPENDIX TWO
Research Protocol: Survey and Interview Questions
*

RESEARCH PROTOCOL

October 4, 2017

Thank you for agreeing to give me this interview. Today I want to ask you some personal questions regarding your TPS status and how it impacts your life. Let me know if there are any questions you do not want to answer. And all answers are confidential.

Interview Questions

1. Why did you leave your country of origin?
2. How did you learn about the TPS program?
3. Who helps you file your TPS case?
4. Has your work permit ever expired while you wait to receive a new one?
5. If yes, how long did it take you to get it? Were you afraid anything could happen to you
6. Did it affect you in any way at work that your permit had expired?
7. Do you feel free to travel inside the United States because you have TPS?
8. What do you feel is the most important protection you get from having TPS?
9. Do you feel that you can make plans for your future here in the USA?
 - a. If yes, what type of plans? B. If no, why?
10. Do you feel you can help your children plan for their future?
11. If you could apply for permanent residency in the USA, would you do it?
 - a. Yes. b. No.

Relationship with Country of Origin

If your spouse, children or relatives are still in your home country,

1. How often do you stay in contact with them?
 - a. Once a week b. Once a month c. More
2. Do you financially support your family back home?
 - b. If yes, how often do you send money? c. How much can you afford to send?
3. Have you ever applied for a permit to travel to visit your relatives back home?
 - b. If no, why not? b. If yes, was the process easy or complicated?
4. If you received a permit to go back home to visit relatives, did you have any problems returning to the USA?
5. When you were in your home country, were you active in community organizations or participated in any social groups?
6. Before coming to the USA, did you participate in your country's elections or in any political group?
7. Are you active now in any organizations that are involved with your community back home?

Examples: Hometown Associations, Soccer Leagues, Solidarity Groups, Political Parties

8. Do you make any monetary contributions to any hometown associations or solidarity groups?
 - a. If so, how much and how often?

9. Have you ever attended a political meeting regarding the politics of your home country?
10. Do you attend events sponsored by your consular office?
 - a. Why type of events?
11. Do you know anyone who has recently arrive to the US from your hometown, country?
12. Do you think the economic situation in your home country is better off today than when you left?
13. How long do you plan to stay in the USA? Would you go back if your TPS is not renewed?

Forms of Political Participation (Conventional)

1. Are you interested on US national politics?
 1. If yes, why are you interested in national USA politics? If no, why not?
2. Are you interested in local politics, what is happening in your city?
 - If yes, why are you interested in local politics? If no, why not?
3. Generally speaking, in regards to United States politics do you consider yourself a
 - Conservative, Liberal/Progressive, Middle of the road or you don't think of yourself on those terms?
4. Generally speaking, if you could vote in the US, which political party would you vote for?
 - Example: Democratic, Republican or not sure*

5. Have you ever attended a political rally here in the USA?

If yes, what it in support of a political candidate? Or was it in support of an issue in your community?

6. Do you know who your local elected officials are? Your Mayor or City Council member?

7. If yes, have you ever attended a meeting to discuss any issues with them?

8. Have you ever attended a meeting to talk to a member of Congress? If yes, what was the meeting about?

9. Do you attend community meetings about local issues?

a. No b. Yes. If yes, can you give an example of an issue?

10. If you kids are in school, do you attend meetings at your children schools?

11. Do you attend community meetings about immigration issues?

a. No. b.If yes, why?

12. Do you trust the government in the United States?

13. Do you feel that you know the laws of the United States?

a. Immigrations Laws: Yes No

b. Employment Laws: Yes No

c. Other laws: Yes No

14. Do you feel that you can go to the local authorities (the police) if you feel your rights have been violated?

15. Have you ever file a claim in a local court?

16. If yes, what type of claim was it? i.e. workplace violations like unpaid wages or other
17. If you have filed a claim, do you feel that trust the justice system in the US to treat you fairly?

Forms of political participation (unconventional)

1. Since coming to the US, have you been involved in local community organizations?
 - a. If yes, can you give me some examples of the type of groups?
 - b. If not, why not?
2. If yes, what is your level of involvement in these groups?
 - a. Very active b. Somewhat active c. Member but not active
3. When did you first join the community groups you mentioned above?
4. Do you make a financial contribution to support them?
 - a. If yes, how much do you contribute?
5. Has your level of community participation increased or decreased in recent years?
6. What type of activities do you participate on with the community groups?
 - a. Information meetings on Immigration law and services
 - b. English as a second language classes
 - c. Computer classes
 - d. Family fun events
 - e. Other

7. Do you engage in any form of non-electoral political activity in these organizations?
 - a. Signing a petition to congress
 - b. Writing or calling members of Congress
 - c. Lobbying members of Congress
 - d. Attending a rally or a demonstrations
 - e. Attending open public elected officials meetings
 - f. Donating volunteering time to a political campaign
 - g. Other
8. Do you think that your participation in those activities is effective?
 - a. No. Why not?
 - b. Yes. Why?
9. Do you belong to a labor union at your workplace? Do you attend union meetings or events? What type? Examples: Contract fights, Political rallies, Canvassing Latino voters on election day , Visits to politicians or making calls to other union members or voters
10. Do you think you need to collaborate with other immigrant groups to change immigration laws and gain legal status for all?
11. Do you feel that you have a voice in changing the laws in the US political system?

Perceptions of Discrimination

1. Do you feel that you are discriminated or treated unfairly in your community?

2. If yes, what do you think are the reasons you might be treated unfairly?
3. Do you feel you have access to better places to live because you have TPS?
4. Do you feel that you have access to better jobs since you received your work permit?
5. Do you feel that you have been discriminated at work because you only have a work-permit?
6. If you have relatives who are undocumented and working, do you feel that you get treated better or the same by employers? Do you get higher wages than they do?
7. Do you feel that you are better off than your fellow compatriots who are undocumented?
8. Do you feel you are protected by US labor laws because you have a work-permit?
9. Do you feel like this country is your home now? Do you feel like you are American? What about your children, do they feel American?
10. Do your children, born here or not, speak your native language still or do they speak English better?
11. Do you feel like you are better off today than when you arrived in the United States?
12. Do you feel that your children have a better future than you did when you were their age?

13. How would you feel if your TPS status is not renewed and you have to return back to your home country?

Collective Identity Questions

1. What do you think is the most important problem facing immigrants like you today in the United States?
2. What do you think is the most crucial issues for those under the TPS program right now?
3. Thinking about the problems immigrants face in the United States, how much do you have in common with other Latino immigrants?
4. Thinking about the problems immigrants face in the United States today, how much do you have in common with other non-Latino immigrants?
5. Thinking about the problems immigrants face in the United States, how much do you have in coming with other minority groups in the USA?
 - a. African Americans b. Asians c. Muslims
6. Do you identify as a Latino in the United States, or do you still identify as a Salvadoran/Honduran immigrant?
 - a. I am a Latino b. I still feel Salvadoran/Honduran/Guatemalan

Conclusion

Is there is anything else that you would like to share?

Thank you for your time.

SURVEY--SES (Social Economic Status)
Rutgers University-TPS Study (PCM)

After IRB Approval

Personal Demographic Data

1. What is your date of birth? _____
2. Where were you born? _____
3. What year did you arrive in the USA? _____
4. What is your marital status?
 - a. Single b. married c. living together d. divorced e. separated
5. Where does your partner reside? a.USA b. your home country
6. What year did you receive TPS? _____
7. How much does it cost you to renew your TPS every 18th months? ____
8. If your partner lives in the USA, what is his/her immigrant status?
 - a. TPS b. Permanent Resident c. Citizen d. Undocumented
9. What is your highest level of education?
 - a. Elementary b. HighSchool c.College d. Trade School
- 10.What is your parents' highest level of education?
 - a. Elementary b. Highschool c. College d. Trade School
11. Have you attended any training or schooling in the USA since you arrived?
 - a. Yes b. No If yes, what type of training:

12. Do you have any children? Yes. ____ No. ____
 - a. If yes, how many _____
 - b. How are old are they? _____
13. If yes, were they born in the USA?
 - a. Yes b. No c. Mixed-some were born here, others not
14. Of those not born in the US,
 - a. Do they live with you? _____
 - b. Or Are they still back in your home country? _____
15. Do you have any other immediate family in the USA? Yes. ____ No. ____

- a. A. Brothers & Sisters b. Aunts & Uncles C. Cousins

Personal Economic Data

1. What is your current employment status?
 - a. employed b. un-employed c. self-employed
2. Have you ever been unemployed? a. Yes b. No
 - a. If yes, how long were you unemployed for? _____
3. Do you currently work Full-time or Part-time? _____
4. How many jobs do you have? A. Just one b. More than one
5. What was your first job when you arrived in the USA? _____
6. What other jobs have you done since you came to the USA?

7. How much do you earn per hour? _____
 - a. Or if you get paid weekly, how much _____
8. Are taxes taken off your pay-stub? (for social security, unemployment, medicare, etc)
 - a. Yes b. No
9. If you are self-employed, do you pay payroll taxes?
10. Do you file income taxes? No Yes.
 - a. Since what year? _____
11. Do you have any savings (bank account) here in the United States?
 - a. Yes b. No
12. Do you have health insurance? a. Yes b. No
13. If yes, do you get it through:
 - a. Your employer b. Your spouse c. you bought insurance yourself
14. Do you have retirement savings like a pension or a 401k?
 - a. Yes b. No
15. Do you own a home or rent an apartment/home?
 - a. Own c. Rent
16. With what religious tradition do you identify the most?

a. Catholic b. Protestant c. Other d. No

Information provided on this survey is confidential. Thank you for participating.

APPENDIX THREE

List of Leaders and Organizations

*

Coomunity Organization	Location	Name of Contact
New Jersey		
CEUS	Union City, NJ (Hudson Co)	Blanca Molina
AFSC	Newark, NJ (Essex & Monmounth)	Chia Chia Wang
Wings of the Spirit	Morristown, NJ (Morris Co)	Diana Mejia Brian Lozano
Salvadoran Consulate	Elizabeth, NJ (Union Co)	Lic. Siria de Lara
New York		
NDLON/NYCOSH	Long Island, NY	Omar Enriquez
BrandWorkers	Manhattan/Queens	Daniel Gross
Washingtong DC Metro Area		
CARECEN DC	Washington DC	Abel Nunez
TPS Alliance-WDC	Washington DC	Nelzy Umanzor
Ambassy of El Salvador	Washington DC	Sonia Umanzor
Consulate of El Salvador	Washington DC	Ana Pena
Casa MD	Maryland and Virginia	Gustavo Torres

APPENDIX FOUR
IRB Approved Disclaimer and Consent Forms

*



**Not Legal. Not Illegal. Just TPS:
Examining the Integration Experience of Central American
Immigrants Living Under a Regime of Permanent Temporality**

*Principal Investigator:
Patricia Campos Medina, PhD Candidate
Rutgers University-Newark*

PURPOSE OF STUDY:

The main purpose of this study is to evaluate the impact of Temporary Protective Status (TPS) on the integration experience of Central Americans immigrants into US society. This study focuses on Central Americans (Salvadorans, Hondurans and Nicaraguans) because this group is the largest beneficiary of the TPS program. They have lived in the US under this status for the last 20 years or more.

The main objective of the research is to better understand the impact that the long-term temporality of TPS holders has on their ability to integrate into US society. The Central American population under TPS has limited rights, mainly the right to work and not be deported, but not a path to eventual full citizenship rights, which has been a key facilitator of integration for prior populations of immigrants. This permanent-temporary regime that governs the lives of this group of immigrants has economic, transnational and psychological consequences that impacts the ability of this group to build social economic mobility, integrate into local political opportunity structures and eventually assimilate into American society.

The findings will lead to policy recommendations on integration policy for immigrant workers on long-term work permit arrangements, and will develop an evaluation model for the integration choices available to Central Americans immigrants and their descendants.

For more information contact principal investigator Patricia Campos-Medina at 201-230-4750 or patricia.camposmedina@rutgers.edu

INFORMED CONSENT FORM

(Request to use Verbal Consent was approved by Rutgers IRB on 12/2017)

Principal Investigator: Patricia Campos-Medina

Project Title: Not Legal. Not Illegal. Just TPS: Examining the Integration Experience of Central American Immigrants Living Under a Regime of Permanent Temporality.

You are invited to participate in a research study that is being conducted by Patricia Campos-Medina who is a PhD Student with the Division of Global Affairs at Rutgers University, Newark, New Jersey. The purpose of this research is to evaluate the impact of Temporary Protective Status (TPS) on the integration experience of Central American immigrants into US society. Approximately 100 subjects will participate in the study, and each individual's participation will last approximately one hour. Participation on this study is voluntary and no monetary compensation is available. The study procedures include responding to a brief written survey and participating in an interview. Interview questions cover different aspects of the subject's experience living in the United States under TPS status.

If you agree to participate in this study, the PI (Patricia Campos-Medina) will conduct an interview with you lasting one hour at a place and time of your choosing. With your permission, the interview will be taped. You may request to review the audio recording of the conversation. The recording and notes of the interview will be kept for the PIs own use and will not be share with anyone else. If you agree to an audio recording of the interview, at any point you can request for comments to be made off record and the recording will be stopped. You are free to refuse to answer any question or stop the interview at any time.

This research is confidential. Confidential means that the research records will include some information about you and this information will be stored in such a manner that some linkage between your identity and the response in the research exists. Some of the information collected about you includes first name, nationality, your job sector and general questions about your family and community. Please note that we will keep this information confidential by limiting access to the data and keeping it in a secure location. The interview audio file will not be shared with anyone besides the PI's supervisor and will be stored in a password secured encrypted file in the PIs personal computer stored at her office. Notes about the interview will be kept separately from the recording in a locked file cabinet away from the interview recordings. Transcripts of the recording will be kept separately from the actual recording and assigned a code number so that no other can know and tie the interview to a specific subject. The key to code names will be kept separately under a password secured locked file.

The PI's Dissertation Committee members (the research team) and the Institutional Review Board at Rutgers University are the only ones that will be allowed to see the data, except as may be required by law. If a report of this study is published, or the results are presented at a professional conference, only group results will be stated. No individual names of participants will ever be used. All study data will be kept for a minimum of three years.

There is no foreseeable risk to participation on this study. Participation is entirely voluntary. Subject can refuse to answer any question and may stop taking part at any time. The subject will receive no compensation for his/her participation and there is no personal benefit from taking part in this study. However, the knowledge obtained from the subject's participation will help better understand the experiences of TPS holders and better inform public policy and the academic study of the integration experience of current and future immigrant workers under temporary work permit arrangements.

If you have any questions about the study or study procedures, you may contact the Principal Investigator (PI) Patricia Campos Medina at patricia.camposmedina@rutgers.edu and cell 201-230-4750. You can also contact the PIs supervisor and dissertation chair, Prof. Ariane Chebel D'Appollonia at arianecd@newark.rutgers.edu. If you have questions about your rights as a research subject, you may contact the IRB Administrator at the Rutgers University, Arts and Sciences IRB:

Institutional Review Board for Protection of Human Subjects
Rutgers University, the State University of New Jersey
Liberty Plaza / Suite 3200
335 George Street, 3rd Floor
New Brunswick, NJ 08901
Phone: 732-932-0150 ext: 2104
Email: humansubjects@orsp.rutgers.edu

You will be given a copy of this consent form for your records. Please keep it for future reference.

Thank you very much for your assistance.

Date consent form is given to subject: _____

Audio Addendum to Consent Form

(Request to use Verbal Consent was approved by Rutgers IRB on 12/2017)

You have already agreed to participate in a research study entitled: Not Legal. Not Illegal. Just TPS: Examining the Integration Experience of Central American Immigrants Living Under a Regime of Permanent Temporality.

The study is conducted by Patricia Campos Medina who is a PhD Student with the Division of Global Affairs at Rutgers University, Newark, New Jersey. We are asking for your permission to allow her to record the interview as part of the research study. You may request to review the audio recording of the conversation.

If you agree to an audio recording of the interview, at any point you can request for comments to be made off record and the recording will be stopped. You are free to refuse to answer any question or stop the interview at any time.

The recording of the interview will be used exclusively for the purpose of transcription, which will facilitate coding and analysis of the data gathered. The recording of the interview will include information collected about you such as first name, nationality, your job sector and general questions about your family and community. If you say anything that you believe at a later point may be hurtful and/or damage your reputation, then you can ask the interviewer to rewind the recording and record over such information OR you can ask that certain text be removed from the dataset/transcripts.

This research is confidential. Confidential means that the research records will include some information about you but the PI will take all steps necessary to minimize any breach of confidentiality such as assigning code names to any transcript of the interview and by securing the audio recordings in a separate encrypted file from the transcripts and any other notes of the interview. The information will be stored in such a manner that some linkage between your identity and the response in the research exists but access to it will be limited to the PI and the PI supervisors. All materials linking recording to transcript will be filed and locked in a separate secure location. The key to code names will be kept separately under a password secured locked file.

After research is completed, the recording(s), the transcripts of the recordings and any notes taken during the interviews will only be stored for three years. If a report of this study is published, or the results are presented at a professional conference, only group results will be stated. No individual names of participants will ever be used.

The principal investigator will not use the recording(s) for any other reason than that/those stated in this verbal consent form.

Do you grant the PI consent to tape the interview?

If yes, please state your first name and date of interview:

APPENDIX FIVE

Recruitment Flyer for Interview Participants

*



Interview Participants Needed

for a Study on Temporary Protected Status (TPS)

I am a PhD Student at Rutgers University-Newark conducting a study on how TPS status impacts the integration choices of immigrants from Central America. This study is part of my dissertation field research requirements. I hope that this study will help inform policies and programs that facilitate the integration experience of immigrant workers in the US under temporary immigration arrangements.

Who can participate?
Immigrants from El Salvador, Honduras and Nicaragua who currently have TPS and reside in New Jersey.

What would you need to do?
You will participate in an interview for approximately one hour at a place and time that is convenient for you. The interview is confidential.

For more information call:
Patricia Campos Medina
Phone: 201-230-4750
patricia.camposmedina@rutgers.edu



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