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Mississippi Immigration Raids: Implications for Social Workers

By
Amy Chance

A thesis submitted to the faculty of The University of Mississippi in partial fulfillment of the requirements of the Sally McDonnell Barksdale Honors College.

Oxford
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ABSTRACT

AMY CHANCE: Mississippi Immigration Raids: Implications for Social Workers

(Under the direction of Dr. Tess Lefmann)

As immigration becomes a primary focus in legislation, social workers face the challenge of how to best serve their immigrant clients despite tough enforcement policies. Mass worksite raids have become a common tactic in the endeavor to limit undocumented immigration. However, there is much evidence showing that immigration raids can have a detrimental effect on individuals and communities. The purpose of this study was to compare the impacts of the most recent immigration raids in five cities throughout Mississippi in order to develop implications for social work practice. Interviews were conducted with key community organizers following the August raids. The results showed that the impact of the immigration raids on Mississippi communities were very similar to the research conducted in cities where similar raids took place. Using evidence from the interviews and past research, ten implications for social work practice were drawn. Further research should include a longitudinal design to fully understand how worksite raids can impact individuals and communities.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

On August 7th, 2019 federal immigration officials raided several food-processing plants in Mississippi and arrested approximately 680 people believed to be working in the United States without authorization (Gonzales, 2019). The coordinated raids conducted by the U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement's Homeland Security Investigations (ICE) targeted seven cities, six work sites, and five companies, resulting in the largest single-state workplace enforcement action in U.S. history (Denhem, 2019). According to some reports, more than 600 ICE agents were involved in the raids, surrounding the perimeters of the targeted plants to prevent workers from escaping (Gonzales, 2019). In addition to the arrests, agents also seized company business records, but no employers were arrested.

The raids followed two months after President Trump's promise to arrest and deport millions across the country as part of his administration's zero-tolerance approach to decreasing immigration (Denhem, 2019). The Jackson-Metro area experienced this reality during the first week of school when many children of detained employees came home to empty houses and missing parents (Sanchez, 2019). The following night, a little more than half of the 680 detained workers were still in ICE custody (Denhem, 2019). The agency has been criticized for not putting safeguards in place for the children of people detained before conducting raids (Campbell, 2019). According to Mississippi's Child Welfare agency, federal immigration officials had not reached out to them either before or after the mass raid. Child Protection Services found out about the raid the same way most Mississippians did--from the media (Campbell, 2019). This goes against Immigration and Customs Enforcement's own policy

created in 2007 as a way to reduce harm to the children of detainees during immigration raids (Campbell, 2019).

Immediately, immigration advocates and aid organizations were coming together to ask volunteers to help affected families with legal assistance and donations. Hotlines were set up for families who were affected by the raids to call and for volunteers looking to help (Silva, 2019). Support and donations poured in after news of the raids made headlines all over the country. Churches and other aid organizations quickly organized food and supply distribution sites (Zhu, 2019). Months following the raids, charities were able to organize food pantries and help pay for monthly bills with all the donations. However, it is uncertain how long they will be able to help pay for rent and utilities. The individuals released along with the families left behind now face the challenge of making a living. They can't leave Mississippi because they have to show up for court for their immigration cases, which can take years to resolve (Zhu, 2019).

Two months later, some 300 people who were arrested in the raid remained detained at two ICE centers in Louisiana. Among the hundreds fighting deportation, about 120 people have been indicted on criminal charges, many related to the fraudulent use of Social Security cards (Zhu, 2019). No chicken processing plant owners or managers have been charged with any crimes yet in the ongoing investigation (Zhu, 2019) and none of the companies targeted in the raid have been charged with immigration or labor law violations (Primera, 2019).

FIELD HEARING ON MS IMMIGRATION RAIDS

On November 7th, 2019 the Committee on Homeland Security, chaired by Congressman Bennie G. Thompson, held a public field hearing in Mississippi on the August 7th ICE workplace raids (National Cable Satellite Corporation, 2019). Joined by Representative Thompson on the committee were Representative Sheila Jackson Lee and Representative Al

Green from Houston, Texas along with Representative Steve Cohen from Memphis, Tennessee. Immigration activists and scholars as well as local officials and law enforcement testified on the impact of the raids on local communities. Serving on the first panel of witnesses were key community members during the aftermath of the raids: Cliff Johnson, the director of the MacArthur Justice Center and member of faculty of the University of Mississippi School of Law; Reverend Odel Medina, pastor of Saint Anne Catholic Church; Constance Slaughter-Harvey, Legacy Education and Empowerment Foundation Board President; and Mississippi Immigrant Coalition lead organizer, Lorena Quiroz-Lewis. These legal and community advocates shared testimonies arguing that these raids were inhumane and unnecessary. As one witness stated in the panel, “There are many questions posed by community residents concerning the timing of the raids, the secrecy of the raids, the lack of plan and coordination of action and the lack of compassion for the children whose families have been destroyed.” The witness panel described their experiences in providing aid in the aftermath of the raid with no ability to prepare.

Serving on the second panel of witnesses were local officials and law enforcement: ICE Special Agent Jere Miles; Sheriff of Scott County Mike Lee; and Mayor of Canton William Truly. The second panel covered similar concerns of the impact the raids would have, along with the lack of consideration on ICE’s part for local officials and enforcement. According to the Sheriff of Scott County, his office was taken by complete surprise. They were never notified about the raids and as a consequence, were left scrambling to find children placements. The Mayor of Canton described similar circumstances. He was notified by a citizen as the raids were taking place down the street. The panel argued that with more coordination ICE officials would have been aware of school schedules and more could have been done to decrease the amount of children left without parents.

The panel described the chaos that ensued the day of the raid as schools, social services, and entire communities scrambled to find a place for children to go. “The most troubling aspect of these raids is the way ICE failed to take into account that children would be left without one or both parents as a result,” stated Representative Bernie Thompson in his opening remarks of the hearing. The day after the raids, ICE workers believed all children had been reunited with at least one parent. However, according to Representative Thompson this was not the case. “We know one single mother remained in ICE custody while her three children were in the care of an unrelated neighbor.” Representative Sheila Jackson from Texas requested an official number of children still not reunited with their family but ICE Special Agent Miles was unable to provide the figure.

Cliff Johnson of the witness panel referred to the raid as “a waste of resources.” Nearly half a million dollars were spent on the one day raids. ICE Special Agent Jere Miles argued that these raids were a successful deterrent for any other immigrants considering coming to America for economic reasons. However, Al Green disagreed stating to truly take away economic incentives the companies hiring these employees should be punished, not the employees themselves. To date, no employers have been prosecuted for hiring illegal immigrants. None of the 680 arrests were “high dollar targets,” meaning none of the individuals arrested were involved in major criminal activity or “wanted” for an extensive period of time. Nearly half of the detainees were released almost immediately on a humanitarian basis. According to Cliff Johnson, “These people are not a threat to our communities and certainly not a threat to our national security. They have become vital parts of the community.” He stated that these communities of immigrants showed no threat did not meet the criteria of requirements for intervention from law enforcement.

In addition to the lack of communication between officials, ICE was also criticized for how they executed the raids. Stories of ICE officials using excessive force and detaining breastfeeding mothers were shared. Only eleven phones were prepared for all 680 detainees to contact relatives to make arrangements. There was also a lack of consideration for language barriers. The assumption was that detainees could understand English or Spanish, but this was not the case. The majority of detainees were Guatemalans who spoke four different indigenous languages. The lack of language resources caused mass confusion among detainees as they were forced to follow orders and sign documents in a language they could not understand. This language barrier has continued to be a challenge in the aftermath of the raids. There is only one bilingual licensed trauma counselor in the state and there is a lack of local knowledge on the particular Guatemalan dialects. Volunteers struggled to communicate intake form questions while legal service providers tried to advise individuals of their basic rights.

In their closing remarks, members of the committee called for action by implementing the law in a way that maintains the dignity and respect for all individuals. Representative Al Green called for more accountability and punishment for employers who have just as much evidence of violations of the law as undocumented immigrants do. The message the committee hopes to convey to Washington is that cooperation with local officials, superintendents, and school districts is necessary and that ICE must consider local requests for aid and assistance before executing raids. By acting out of compassion and intentionality with local officials, the committee hopes that the mistakes that were made in the Mississippi raids can be prevented in the future.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Immigration has recently been at the forefront of legislative endeavors, with policy initiatives directed at strengthening the borders and increasing penalties for those who enter the United States illegally (Juby & Kaplan, 2011). Over the last decade the number of worksite raids have increased, which has made communities and officials consider their own function before and after a raid. While the intent of raids is to identify and remove unauthorized immigrants, it is likely to have much broader consequences than that. Research related to the impact of immigration raids on unauthorized workers and communities suggests that, much like disasters, worksite raids can devastate immigrants, their families, and the communities in which they live (Juby & Kaplan, 2011). Deportation and detention can disrupt the structure of families and increase food, income, and housing instability. It can also have lasting effects on the structure of a community, affecting the local economy, businesses, and schools of where the raids take place.

Rural communities are often the target of raids yet also have limited resources compared with urban communities (Juby & Kaplan, 2011). Social services do not have the resources to cater to these effects for the extensive time it requires. The aftereffect of raids has the potential to quickly exhaust the financial and mental health resources that a community has. Social workers and other humanitarian aid services face the challenge of organizing and meeting initial and long term needs of individuals affected by raids. This is made difficult when there is no warning of worksite raids and there is no action plan in place.

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

Initial research for this study was done by examining the after effects of immigration raids by identifying effects in previous communities that experienced raids. These trends were analyzed by addressing the following questions:

1. What areas are most impacted in the aftermath of immigration raids in the United States?
2. What kind of humanitarian aid is utilized following the raids?
3. What are some practice, research, and policy implications for social workers in the future?

The study's initial findings divided the effects of raids into three categories: individuals and families, economy, and structure. This study was expanded to evaluate whether similar trends in those three categories were reflected in the most recent and largest single-state workplace enforcement action in Mississippi. Due to the lack of data on the August 2019 Mississippi raids, the secondary portion of this research utilized community hearings and structured interviews with key community organizers to identify the effects of the raids on multiple Mississippi communities.

Implications were then drawn for social workers based on the review of literature and the structured interviews with community organizers. The social work implications were divided into three parts: practice, research, and policy. The research discussed will include information on how immigration raids affect social work practice, legislation promoting immigrant rights, current immigration laws, and proactive planning for raids. The study also provides insight into the types of aid that may be needed in the aftermath of an immigration raid such as financial and mental health resources. Lastly, future research surrounding immigration raids will be suggested.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

INTRODUCTION

Studying immigration raid outcomes in the United States is complicated due to the wide range of entities it can have an effect on. Most of the literature including quantitative and qualitative data on immigration raids and its impact referenced in this study come from professional journals on social work and immigration studies. This study was guided by literature on immigration raids, its impact on the community and individuals, legislation relevant to immigration, and implications for social workers.

IMMIGRATION RAIDS

Immigration has recently been at the forefront of legislative endeavors, which vary widely and have substantial impact on the lives of immigrants (Hofmann et al. 2018). For the past decade, the fast-track deportation process known as expedited removal has been used mostly by Border Patrol agents near the border (Gomez, 2019). Created in 1996, expedited removal is a process by which immigration officers can quickly deport certain noncitizens who are undocumented or have committed fraud or misrepresentation. This includes individuals who arrive at the border, as well as individuals who entered without authorization if they are apprehended within two weeks of arrival and within 100 miles of the Canadian or Mexican border (American Immigration Council, 2019). As part of the Immigrant Responsibility Act of 1996 (IIRIRA), programs such as 287(g) and Secure Communities were implemented to allow more communication between local authorities, the FBI, and Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) agencies (Abrego, 2016). These programs legalized the deputization of local law officials to act as federal immigration law enforcers (Priog & Vargas, 2016).

Though authorized by Congress in 1996, the 9/11 attacks were the main catalyst for the 287(g) program (Pham, 2018). Initially, the 287(g) program was meant to focus on dangerous criminals and other public safety concerns; however, it significantly expanded in 2006 with the goal of apprehending as many unauthorized immigrants as possible, regardless of their criminal records (Pham, 2018). This has meant increased numbers of detentions and deportations through sweeping workplace raids and routine traffic stops. In recent years the Department of Homeland Security reports that they have deported over 300,000 immigrants annually, many likely to include the parents of U.S. citizen children (Abrego 2016).

The 2006 Swift raids marked the first stage of new immigration enforcement and increased workplace actions targeting undocumented immigrants. In December of 2006, about 1,300 illegal immigrants working at six meat processing plants located in Iowa, Minnesota, Nebraska, Texas, Colorado, and Utah owned by Swift & Co. were arrested in the largest immigration enforcement action in U.S. history as it is estimated that twenty-three percent of Swift's production workers were illegal immigrants (Kammer, 2009).

Activities such as workplace raids, detention, and deportation have increased annually since 2007 (Hacker et al. 2012). In the past decade several mass worksite immigration raids have occurred. Other examples include Postville, Iowa where 289 unauthorized workers were arrested at the AgriProcessors Kosher meat processing plant. In April 2019, ICE agents arrested more than 280 employees suspected of working at CVE Technology Group without authorization in Allen, Texas (Cruz, 2019). Just a year earlier, nearly 100 immigrants at a meat-processing plant in Bean Station, Tennessee were detained (American Immigration Council, 2018). All of these mass workplace raids disrupted communities and had consequences far beyond what officials had considered. Many adults and children were traumatized to the extent that their daily lives

were effected resulting in an increase in mental and physical health symptoms (Juby & Kaplan, 2011). Community resources were quickly drained and many immigrant families were left jobless and homeless. The raids negatively affected the local economy causing many businesses to suffer and even some to close.

In January 2017, President Trump issued an executive order which directed the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) to expand the use of “expedited removal” to its full statutory extent (American Immigration Council, 2019). Now Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) agents can unilaterally question, arrest, detain and deport undocumented immigrants who have been here for less than two years that they encounter anywhere in the country (Gomez, 2019). As immigration enforcement becomes broader and the pool of individuals who may be subject to deportation widens, so does the level of impact. According to publicly-available government statistics, the total number of arrests in 2018 were 44% higher than in 2016 (Cantor et al. 2019). Although the number of mass workplace raids are increasing, community preparation for this type of event has not. The following research expounds on the impact ICE raids can have on a community and how social workers can prepare for a response.

THE IMPACT OF IMMIGRATION RAIDS

According to research related to the impact of immigration raids, much like disaster, worksite raids can have devastating effects on individuals and their communities (Juby & Kaplan, 2011). Most literature categorizes the impacts of immigration raids into three areas: Individuals and families, structural, and economic. These studies show how raids affect the individual, and also how they disrupt the structure and economy of the community in which they live. Many adults and children were traumatized to the extent that their daily lives were affected (Juby & Kaplan, 2011). Along with psychological symptoms, individuals and families also

experience new levels of stress with providing for their household. School personnel reported an increase in behavior problems and an increase in mental health care (Juby & Kaplan, 2011). In large-scale raids, a significant portion of the community is made up of immigrants. When they are removed or flee out of fear, the structure and economy of the whole community can be thrown off. Businesses lose revenue and the economy in even surrounding communities can be affected. The following sections reveal how communities who experienced a mass immigration raid were impacted on each level according to research.

Individuals and Families

The effects of having “parents without papers” are apparent early and endure across individual life courses and generations (Getrich, 2019). One study examining ethnicity-specific patterns in birth outcomes before and after the Postville raid found that infants born to Latina mothers had a 24% greater risk of low birth weight after the raid when compared with the same period one year earlier (Novak et al., 2017). Increased risk of low birth weight was observed for USA-born and immigrant Latina mothers but no such change was observed among infants born to non-Latina White mothers (Novak et al., 2017).

Young children’s development is adversely affected by their undocumented parents’ poor working conditions, isolated social networks, and avoidance of programs and authorities (Getrich, 2019). This reality is maximized in the aftermath of an immigration raid. Family separation has emerged as a common repercussion of raids, leaving children behind to experience feelings of abandonment, emotional trauma, and psychological duress (Getrich, 2019). Deportations upset the structure of mixed-status families whose members include people with different citizenship or immigration statuses. Families left behind face a decline in income, housing instability and greater food insecurity (Getrich, 2019).

Children in families that experience detention or deportation are often the “collateral damage of enforcement” (Getrich, 2019, p. 95). Community members after the Postville, Iowa raids reported that the experience was particularly horrific for the children who were in school during the raid (Juby & Kaplan, 2011). School personnel reported an increase in behavior problems. The school counselor reported more aggressive behaviors and the need for mental health care in the schools increased, particularly in the middle school (Juby & Kaplan, 2011). The high school in Postville also reported the loss of several students who were obligated to seek employment due to lost family income.

Immigration enforcement policies related to detention and health care access are known to influence the health of immigrants. Immigrant families are already at high risk for limited access to healthcare in part due to their inability to obtain health insurance for themselves or their children (Hacker et al., 2012). Fear, confusion about rules and regulations, and immigration status are all factors that contribute to the lack of access immigrants may get to healthcare. Studies on the impact of Proposition 187, a 1994 California ballot initiative that prevented undocumented immigrants from getting publicly-funded health care, found that immigrants feared obtaining medical care (Hacker et al., 2012). Fear of deportation has also been associated with poorer self-perceived health and activity limitation along with emotional distress. Agencies that assisted the community during and after raids in Iowa, Texas, and Tennessee noted that it was not uncommon for individuals to exhibit symptoms of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD).

Structure and Economy

When businesses such as meat processing plants or technology companies come into small towns, they help improve the economy by bringing employment, resulting in an influx of workers from other towns, states, and countries. These plants become the economic driver for the community (Juby & Kaplan, 2011). For example, prior to the arrival of AgriProcessors in Iowa, the city of Postville was at risk for extinction and its school was in jeopardy of closing (Juby & Kaplan, 2011). AgriProcessors revived the small community by bringing employment opportunities, businesses to cater to the newly populated town, and an increase in the tax base from the resident surge to help sustain the school (Juby & Kaplan, 2011). Since the raid, native individuals and families have left town to find employment and the school along with other small businesses are at risk of closing (Juby & Kaplan, 2011).

Rural communities where most of these large processing plants reside are often targets of raids, yet also have limited resources compared to more developed communities. The aftereffect of a raid has the potential to quickly exhaust community resources (Juby & Kaplan, 2011). Citizens in Postville and the surrounding areas organized to help those in need after the raid in the form of food and financial benefits. Social agencies, churches, local businesses, and individuals were initially able to address most of the basic housing and dietary needs but due to lack of resources and government assistance, were unable to provide long term assistance to all who needed it (Juby & Kaplan, 2011).

As deportations become more visible in the undocumented community, it may affect the likelihood of a mixed-status family to use social services. Women Infants and Children (WIC) along with other social services' main mission is to safeguard the health of low-income families. One study found that risk of deportation negatively affected WIC uptake by mixed-status families, preventing eligible families from receiving aid (Priog & Vargas, 2016). Immigrant

families are more likely to live in poverty, are less likely to have access to healthcare, and are more isolated in society. Immigrant families are especially at risk as family disruption through deportation due to these factors and may not seek the help out of fear (Priog & Vargas, 2016).

Forced separations affect immigrant communities more broadly, creating a feeling that no family is safe (Getrich, 2019). In communities where crackdowns and deportations take place, residents are less likely to cooperate with law enforcement or report crimes for fear of being arrested or deported (American Immigration Council Staff, 2018). According to data from *The Washington Post*, the number of Latinos reporting violent crimes went down from coast to coast (Cruz, 2017). For example, Houston, Texas, with a Latino population of nearly 40 percent, reported a 43 percent drop in the number of Latinos reporting rape and sexual assault, as well as a 12 percent decline in reports of aggravated assault and robbery respectively (PEW Research, 2016). Similarly, the Los Angeles Police Department reported a 10 percent drop in spousal abuse reports and a 25 percent decrease in the reporting of rape among the city's Latino residents. Officers in New Jersey saw a 6 percent drop in service calls from residents in predominantly undocumented communities (Cruz, 2017). Although the Latino population is not a representation for all immigrants, the data can signal problems for the entire immigrant community (Cruz, 2017).

IMPLICATIONS FOR SOCIAL WORKERS

The primary mission of the social work profession is to enhance human well-being and help meet the basic human needs of all people, with particular attention to the needs and empowerment of people who are vulnerable, oppressed, and living in poverty (NASW, 2017). Two core values rooted in the mission of social work is social justice and recognition of the dignity and worth of a person. Fundamental to social work is attention to the environmental

forces that create, contribute to, and address problems in living such as those issues surrounding immigration in the United States. Social workers, backed by their core values and code of ethics, contribute to alleviating these problems through direct practice, research, and policy initiatives.

Important demographic changes have been taking place in the United States during the past few decades as a result of immigration (Cota et al., 2012). The lives of immigrants in the U.S. are radically altered by social policy and immigration laws (Cota et al., 2012). Given that immigrants make up over 13% of the U.S. population and nearly 10.7 million of them are undocumented, there is a pressing need for social workers to understand the impact of the current enforcement climate on immigrant's health and well-being (Hacker et al., 2012). Social workers must navigate culture, language, religion, family support, and community resources while still providing high-quality services to diverse ethnic populations. They must be aware of how current immigration policy can affect their clients, while also advocating for policies that promote the well-being of immigrants here in the United States. The research is clear that the current trend of mass detention and deportation can have detrimental effects on an individual and community level. It is vital that U.S. immigration policy provides a coherent and effective approach for attending to the emotional and behavioral needs of children whose parents are undocumented immigrants. (Allen et al., 2015). It is also essential for policy to shift focus to creating a structure of strategies that will minimize undocumented entry while protecting the rights and privileges of all persons living in the United States (Bradlee & Zayas, 2014).

Direct Practice

Helping immigrant communities should start long before events such as immigration raids take place. Resettlement in a new country can be traumatic and involves moving to communities that have very different languages and cultures which already makes navigating

resources a challenge (Juby & Kaplan, 2011). Practitioners must be educated about immigration policies and public benefits and services available to undocumented immigrants in order to empower clients to utilize them (Hargrove, 2006). After raids, immigrants may lose trust and doubt that the community is there to help them. Trust can be built in the planning and organization efforts to coordinate plans and resources before, during, and after the raids. Integrating churches as focal points of aid provides immigrants with a trusting place to access resources (Juby & Kaplan, 2011).

One approach social workers can take for preparing and dealing with mass immigration raids is treating them as a disaster in order to develop strategies for resources and service delivery. Response teams integrated within community structure can help reduce the effects of enforcement raids by improving service and resource delivery in the immediate aftermath (Juby & Kaplan, 2011). Social workers can develop strategies to ensure that children will be cared for if parents are absent and that schools have contact information for children left alone (Juby & Kaplan, 2011). For example, one church in Mississippi developed a post deportation system of care for children of undocumented people. The church wanted to ensure that if an undocumented parent was detained, children would still be picked up from school and informed in a manner that would minimize trauma. They can also organize aid such as basic food, shelter, and financial assistance needed in the immediate aftermath. Awareness of resources in the community is key. By making proactive agreements with agencies and recruiting emergency volunteers, meeting peoples' concrete needs will be much more efficient.

Research

Social work research is vital in understanding and assessing the needs and resources in an environment and also the impact of legislation and social policy has on communities. In regards to immigration raids, social workers can show how large of an impact they can have on individuals and the communities in which they live. Raids are known to quickly exhaust community resources (Juby & Kaplan, 2011). Social workers can study what aid was most utilized in past raids in order to prepare their own communities. For example, the main resources used after the Postville, Iowa raids were financial assistance for housing, bills, and food and mental health services (Juby & Kaplan, 2011). There is also a history of lack of consideration for children whose parents have been detained. Though there are safeguards in places, ICE is under no requirement to give parents time to arrange for caretakers for their children (Women's Refugee Committee, 2013). With this knowledge, social workers have guidelines of how to set an emergency action plan into place.

Research on the psychosocial effects of worksite raids is limited, but several findings show that children develop behavioral and mental health problems and people in the raided communities are susceptible to PTSD (Juby & Kaplan, 2011). Social workers can assist in community planning to ease the negative psychosocial consequences of raids, while also seeking evidence to inform future policy (Juby & Kaplan, 2011). Research within the social work profession is crucial in determining the impact and effectiveness of policies and programs. Development of new knowledge, policies and programs often result from research efforts. Many of the issues addressed in this research could be turned into changes in immigration policy.

Policy

The National Association of Social workers recognizes that the capacity of social workers to help is constrained by immigration policies. Immigration policies concern issues of social justice and human rights, issues that are at the heart of the social work profession (NASW, 2007). Social workers should advocate for and support policies, programs, and initiatives that respect the dignity and worth of all people, regardless of national origin and/or immigration status. Immigration raids highlight the true nature and impact of immigration laws. The insights gathered from examining the impact of the raids must inform the ongoing debate about immigration law (Thronson, 2008). By integrating children into the immigration discourse, practitioners and policymakers will be better able to understand the effects of immigration enforcement, reduce harm to children, and provide for the protection of immigrant rights (Bradlee & Zayas, 2014).

Social workers can use current immigration policies to advocate for future legislation that will value the human rights of all people. One form of relief from deportation available in immigration court is cancellation of removal. It is available only to persons who can establish that they have “been physically present in the United States for a continuous period of not less than 10 years” and “have been a person of good moral character during that period” (Thronson, 2008). Following immigration raids, witnesses describe those who were detained as hardworking, contributing members of society. Though many who are arrested meet the requirements that would prevent removal, they still must go through the traumatic raid process. With the expedited removal expansion, non-U.S. citizens for whom there may be such options to remain in the U.S. lawfully, may now be deported simply because ICE does not provide them enough time to pursue those options (National Immigration Law Center, 2017).

Under the interior enforcement executive order issued in January 2017, virtually anyone who is undocumented is considered a “priority” for deportation, whereas initially ICE had been focusing its enforcement activity on people with serious criminal convictions (National Immigration Law Center, 2017). Sweeping ICE raids detains people who happen to be in the wrong place at the wrong time, including people under DACA. Previously, when ICE detained such people during an operation, they were released once it became clear that they were not enforcement priorities (National Immigration Law Center, 2017). Shifting policies that focus on more strategic enforcement would decrease the amount of unnecessary arrests and punish the people who actually pose a threat to Americans.

Past large-scale worksite immigration raids throughout the United States show investigations into employers often last more than a year, and criminal charges seldom materialize (Ramseth, 2019). The goal partly for ICE raids is to discourage any economic incentives that undocumented immigrants may have for coming to the United States. Though raids have the ability to intimidate employees, immigrants will likely not be completely discouraged from working if employers are still willing to hire. Under federal law, employers are required to verify the identity and employment eligibility of all individuals they hire, and to document that information using the Employment Eligibility Verification Form I-9. ICE’s worksite enforcement strategy states that they continue to focus on the criminal prosecution of employers who knowingly break the law and that worksite enforcement investigators help combat worker exploitation, illegal wages, child labor, and other crimes collateral to worksite enforcement (U.S. Immigration Customs and Enforcement). However, prosecuting corporations, as opposed to individual workers or managers, for immigration-related offenses is relatively rare. The Transactional Records Access Clearinghouse at Syracuse University examined federal data

for a one-year period--April 2018 through March 2019--and found that no companies were prosecuted for knowingly hiring undocumented workers (Merle, 2019). Social workers can use this evidence to advocate for policy that keeps employers accountable for their actions and prevents employers from taking advantage of undocumented workers.

SUMMARY

A big-picture understanding of the impact that immigration raids can have on individuals and communities can help social workers better advocate for immigrant communities. Practitioners can use evidence of past ICE raids as guidelines to create emergency response plans in the wake of an immigration raid. As evidence of the literature, there is much more research to be done pertaining ICE raids and its impact. As social workers respond to these communities in need, they can partake in data collection to better inform research. Social workers can also use this literature and future research to advocate for policies that fight for the rights of all people residing in the United States.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY AND DATA ANALYSIS

METHODOLOGY

The study employed an inductive qualitative design utilizing past research on immigration raids, to identify social work practice and policy needs related to the effect of immigration raids on individuals and communities. The primary research questions guiding this study were: (1) What were the primary resources utilized in the aftermath of the raids? And (2) How can social workers prepare communities for this type of event?

Sample and Recruitment

Two lead community organizers participated in the study. In addition to providing verbal consent, the participants were required to meet the following inclusion criteria: (1) Volunteers or organizers of humanitarian aid in the aftermath of the August Mississippi immigration raid; (2) current employment in a practice setting that involves working directly with immigrant communities; (3) reside in at least one of the five cities that were affected by the immigration raids. Four participants were recruited through the McLean Institute for Public Service and Community Engagement on campus. Potential qualifying participants were emailed by the researcher with more information. The email included information detailing the study and advised interested individuals to contact the researcher to schedule an interview time. Participants were not reimbursed monetarily for their participation. One interview was conducted in person and the other interview was conducted over the phone.

Participants

Both participants were lead organizers in the aftermath of the August Mississippi immigration raid. All participants currently reside and practice in a setting that involves

immigrant communities in at least one of the five raid sites. The first interview was conducted with Dorothy Balsler, Director of Parish and Community Engagement Ministries (PACEM) at Catholic Charities. She is also the director of Catholic Charities's Migrant Support Center which provides support to immigrants seeking legal status. The second interview was conducted with Father Odel Medina, a Catholic Priest of St. Anne's in Carthage, MS. His congregation is made up of many people directly affected by the immigration raids. Both interviewees were vital organizers in distributing aid to communities in the aftermath of the raids.

DATA COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS

Through individual in-depth interviews, a range of practical, ethical, and legal issues, arising as a result of the immigration raids, were explored. Participants were asked about: (1) their role in the community post-immigration raids; (2) kinds of aid utilized; (3) changes in the community post-raid; (4) how communities can prepare for this type of event; (5) implications for social workers; and (6) immigration policy. The investigator facilitated the 0.5 to 1-hour in-depth interview, which took place at Catholic Charities and over the phone. Key informant interviews were recorded and intelligent transcription was used. Inductive analysis involved describing and linking patterns within the data to identify emerging themes. Selected quotations from the interviews are used to illustrate key thematic findings from the study.

Findings

The interviewees indicated that the ICE raids had a very similar impact on Mississippi communities as research has shown in other communities. The prevailing finding was that large scale worksite raids dramatically impact individuals and families, structure of communities, and economies. As Dorothy Balsler of Catholic Charities remarked, "This whole thing is trickling to other areas in the community...The thing that has not been recognized is how immigrants really

have contributed to the economy of these local communities.” Immigration raids will continue to have detrimental effects on individuals and communities if there is no preparation or prevention. The respondents all considered the role of social workers in preventing and responding to the impact of worksite ICE raids. The key findings can be supported by themes in three different areas of social work arising from the data: (1) direct practice; (2) policy; and (3) research.

Direct Practice

One of the most important things about preparing for this type of event is knowing the community and the resources available. “I would say for any social worker that may be involved with immigrants is to know who your community is. Where are the immigrants in the community?” expressed Basler “On a broader scale, know the issues. Be educated about the issues so you can understand.” Across all five sites, it was difficult documenting needs and figuring out whose job it was to distribute aid. “I started to see as I visited places that everybody had a separate intake form. Sometimes they would even change it week to week. They all had a different style or a different way to assess and a different understanding of what the assessment should be,” explained Basler. To make sure funds were distributed accordingly, the Director developed a single intake form and a process to communicate with churches on an ongoing basis. Becoming more uniformed and organized made distributing aid much more efficient.

Both respondents explained the chaos of the day of the raid and the lack of communication between officials. A common theme throughout the literature and the interviews was a lack of warning that the worksite raids were going to take place. Both Father Odel and Dorothy Basler found out through local community members after the raids had already been initiated. “My first reaction was to go to the office of ICE but they were closed. So what more could we do? We didn’t know anything. For maybe 12-18 hours after [the raids] people were so

afraid...The government or ICE didn't answer any questions. So that was the first challenge, to understand what was going on in order to help people. Because if you don't know what is going on how can you help?" stated Father Odell reflecting on the day of the raids.

Identifying what type of aid was needed was the first priority. "So I didn't know what our role at that time would be for Catholic Charities. By the time I got to the office that day it started to become clear because people were calling here just upset. We basically started right away putting stuff on our website, trying to organize within ourselves just to respond to those calls" stated Balser. The most common assistance distributed after raids was financial assistance and mental health care. Immigrants no longer able to work needed assistance paying rent and utilities along with buying groceries for their families. "People from all over started to call us and see how they could help these people. So that is when we started creating kind of a program for supporting financial necessities," explained Father Odell. This financial support has lasted several months after the raids, but recently funds have dwindled so organizers have begun a step down process to stretch the money a little further.

Another common need after immigration raids is mental health services. One of the main challenges following the raids in Mississippi was the lack of bilingual therapists. There was only one therapist who spoke Spanish and she had already planned on resigning before the raids hit. She ended up leaving in December so after that there were no longer any bilingual therapists available to help. Though there were translators on hand, most of them did not speak the Guatemalan dialect that most of the immigrants affected spoke. "That may be part of the issue when they [the Guatemalans] don't necessarily understand somebody even speaking Spanish, or why they aren't eligible for this assistance." stated Balser referring to the language barriers.

It is important for social workers to understand how people are directly impacted. Though research commonly compares the results of this crisis to a natural disaster, Balser explains why it is much different, “In a disaster when you have people that have access to employment or income, they still have to recover but there’s a light at the end of the tunnel. We don’t know what the future is for these families.” It is important to plan for long-term recovery. “There are attorneys still involved. There are plenty of people still in detention. Some people have been deported. People still have ankle monitors and they don’t know when their court hearings are going to take place. They are sitting in limbo and they don’t know where they are going to be able to support their families,” said Balser. Planning emergency action plans for immigration raids can very much model those plans of a natural disaster. However, social workers should plan for much more long-term care, realizing that resources for individuals to get themselves back on their feet may not be available for a very long time.

Lastly, interviewees expressed a need for case management. “As the money dwindles how do we support people to connect with resources? There is no case management. And a case manager as I see, it is somebody that would be available to have a caseload of folks that can look at their individual situation and on an individual family basis, make a plan. That is definitely lacking right now,” stated Balser. Though the financial aid and resources distributed in the immediate aftermath is helpful, it is not a feasible task to keep up months and months after the initial raid. Case management would provide a more individualized plan of care that is required long term.

Research

The problems that arose during and after the ICE raids discussed by respondents could be used as guidelines for social work research. A common theme that was discussed throughout the

interviews was the lack of consideration for what immigrants contribute to local communities. “The State organizations were so upset because they know these people are hard workers and they are good for the economy in the state.” stated Father Odell. Research displaying the impact raids have on local businesses, employers, and the economy could be presented as evidence against future large-scale raids. Evidence of immigrants' contribution in society could also have huge impacts on immigration legislation in the future.

Another issue that arose following the raids was the disorderly assessments taken across all five sites. Due to language barriers and lack of workers, the assessments were being done by inexperienced community members. “They were already putting together intake forms as best they could. These are not social workers, these are not people trained in social services at all,” stated Balser. Realizing the different intake forms would make it difficult to know who to distribute aid to, the director stepped in to develop a form that could be used by everyone. Research conducted on the length of time and type of aid that was utilized following raids could be utilized to form intake assessments that could be distributed by anyone.

Lastly, knowing what resources are needed and where to get them are extremely important in the aftermath of an immigration raid. Individuals were turning to churches, social services, and a variety of other volunteer agencies when they were looking for help. Research on where aid was utilized could help provide social workers and other organizers with what entities to include in their emergency response plans to raids. When asked how he thought communities could be better prepared for this type of event, Father Odell responded, “Having good information. We are trying to inform people more about their rights. So maybe with more information and community organization that will be better.” Research providing information on how past communities and individuals are impacted by raids can help social workers prepare

communities in the future. The evidence from past literature and these interviews both indicate that community engagement is vital in the wake of an immigration raid and thus to research. Collaborating with networks throughout the community such as churches and social service agencies provides an organized response to raids that furthers “buy-in” to research that is self-led and beneficial to all. As indicated in the interviews, engaging immigrant communities and leaders prior to worksite raids is just as important as post-raid.

Policy

In addition to using research for informed practice, evidence on the impact of large-scale immigration raids can be used to inform immigration policy. Social workers can use this evidence to advocate for immigrant enforcement policies that do not prioritize non-violent individuals for deportation. It could also be used to improve ICE policies of communication with local officials around plans of a raid. This type of research could protect the rights of immigrants and enhance the type of immigration enforcement that takes place in the United States.

Practitioners must also be knowledgeable in current legislation that could affect their immigrant clients. According to one of the participants, anything having to do with immigration reform is important for social workers to be aware of. Balsler also explained the importance of knowing the difference between a refugee and an immigrant, “They are totally different. They come into the country in different ways.” She also talked about the importance of policies specifically around asylum, “What are the policies specifically around asylum status and what are the blockages of people currently that seek asylum status? Because there are definitely a lot of blockages right now, a lot of obstacles, mostly at the border. So any policy that has to do with asylum status or just seeking legal status [is important].” Knowing policies can help social workers empower their clients to know their rights and the resources available to them.

Limitations

This study contains several limitations. The voluntary and self-selected nature of the respondents suggests the need for caution in generalizing the findings of the immigration raids in Mississippi. Participants with different experiences may offer other insights and views. A related limitation is that the sample only included two interviews. Including more interviewees may have provided greater insight to experience to all five sites. Despite these limitations, the findings correspond with the literature and provide helpful insight to the impact that the immigration raid had on individuals and communities.

Summary

This research represents one of the first studies to examine the effect of the immigration raids affecting five cities in Mississippi. The overwhelming finding was consistent with research on past ICE raids. This study focused on qualitative evidence to provide implications for social work practice, research, and policy. Impacts on individuals and communities were discussed. Findings in the current study indicated that communication was among the most vital necessities in the aftermath of the raid. Both respondents expressed a need of considering immigrants' contribution to local communities and the economy. Using the evidence from these interviews, the researcher was able to identify useful implications for social workers that will be discussed in the following chapter.

CHAPTER 4

PRACTICE IMPLICATIONS FOR SOCIAL WORKERS

The impact of immigration enforcement through raids have significant implications for practice. Worksite raids can devastate immigrants and communities. Planning for this type of event involves knowledge on many different levels. Social workers must be knowledgeable of resources, policies, and research informed practice to best care for their immigrant clients. The findings in this study expand on previous research of the effects of ICE raids and it also examined the roles of social work practice during and after the raid. Based on the findings of this study, the researcher provides ten implications for social workers when working in immigrant communities.

1. Know the Community

All social workers should be familiar with the communities that they serve. Demographic knowledge such as economic status, age, and culture can benefit practitioners in identifying vulnerable populations and assessing the needs of a community. Specifically, knowing where immigrant populations are in an area can help social workers identify families, schools, businesses, and agencies that could be affected by an ICE raid. It is also vital for social workers to make connections with key leaders and organizers such as local officials, church leaders, and volunteer agencies in order to build a strong support system for immigrant clients. Empowering clients should start long before a crisis takes place. By identifying, locating, and linking client systems to needed resources, social workers can build strong rapport throughout the immigrant community.

2. Empower Immigrant Clients

Once social workers familiarize themselves with the community, they can use their knowledge to educate and connect individuals to resources available to them. It is important to remember that immigrant families can be made up of individuals of varying immigration statuses. An individual in need may not seek resources they are eligible for out of fear of putting their undocumented friend or family member at risk. Policies surrounding immigration are often changing and confusing. Social workers can provide bilingual presentations at local churches or community centers that inform the immigrant community of their basic constitutional rights and include preparation plans for immigration enforcement. They can also locate resources that don't necessarily put clients at risk for detention or deportation.

Transitioning into another culture can also be a struggle for immigrant clients. Learning a new language and new customs on top of everyday stressors and past traumas can make it impossible to thrive in a new environment. Social workers can create support groups for immigrants and connect them to free English classes in the community. They can also identify mentorship and after school programs for children and adolescents. Clients may not always come directly to social services. That is why it is important for social workers to work with prominent immigrant leaders such as church pastors, to inform the community of the resources available. Social workers must first identify the needs of their clients by meeting them where they are. Then they can locate resources and engage immigrant leaders to get clients involved.

3. ICE Raid Response Plan

Once social workers are familiar with their community and have identified a risk for a potential ICE raid, they can create a response plan. The initial response plan should include at least four things: a headquarters, coordination with local officials, a team of volunteers, and a

team of case managers. The headquarters will be where the main operations take place. This should be a place central in the immigrant community, such as a church or a school, where immigrants feel safe and comfortable. It should also be a large enough space to comfortably fit the potential size of volunteers and clients. Finding a location with multiple rooms could be beneficial in providing privacy for leadership meetings, counseling, and assessments. Along with the size of the space, social workers should also plan for the layout of the headquarters. This will help ensure that every client is seen and connected to appropriate resources.

Secondly, communication with local officials is vital. This includes but is not limited to local mayors, police, school officials, and social services. Local leaders should meet together and be a part of organizing a response plan. A member of the team should be assigned to initiate the response plan if an ICE raid were to take place. This person would be responsible for communicating with other officials and should be where any questions are directed to. This will ensure that reliable information is getting out to everyone in an organized fashion.

A team of volunteers should also be included in the response plan. This team should include mental health professionals, translators, and religious leaders. There should also be volunteers assigned to distributing water and snacks and available to answer questions. Lastly, a team of case managers that can provide assessments and follow up with clients will be helpful in distributing aid in the future.

4. Assessment Forms

Creating a uniform assessment form is helpful when raids take place in multiple sites across a state. One of the problems identified after the Mississippi raids was the inconsistencies between intake forms. Social workers can develop an assessment form that can be distributed across sites. The form created in Mississippi included a two-part process. The first

form was a family profile sheet that was used to get information on each household. This included the number of people, family income, and how the family was affected by the raid. This form only needs to be filled out once. The second part of the intake was the needs assessment. This included rent, utilities, medical supplies, phone cards, and gift cards. This form can be updated by clients as needed. A verification of rent form was also provided to ensure the correct amount was distributed to clients. Examples of these forms are provided in appendix 2.

5. Language Barriers

Language barriers can be a difficult challenge in the aftermath of an ICE raid. When recruiting translators for the ICE Raid Response Plan, language and dialect should be considered. Do not assume that all immigrant clients will be able to speak Spanish. In the planning stage, learn where clients are from and if there are different dialects they speak. Recruit prominent leaders in immigrant communities to help identify potential translators. If there are no translators of a specific dialect in the area, locate translators that could be available by phone.

6. Long-term Resources

The ICE raid response plan is dedicated to the immediate aftermath of an ICE raid. Identifying long-term resources should also be considered in planning. This should include a location to drop off and distribute donations. It may also include mental health resources, legal assistance, employment referral, and continued financial assistance. Social workers should identify agencies in their communities such as non-profits, churches, and social services available that may be useful for their clients. Planning also requires identification of limited resources. Social workers can find innovative ways to create a supportive environment for the immigrant community. This may take form in support groups, community dialogues, or after school programs.

7. Case Management

Long-term case management is needed in the aftermath of raids. As seen after past immigration raids, donations do not last forever. However, there will still be clients who require further assistance. Grants can be applied for to employ a team of social workers that can provide individual case management. Social workers can connect clients to remaining donations and resources available in the community while also monitoring the progress of clients. Case management empowers clients and ensures they get their individualized needs met.

8. Mental Health

The need for mental health services following a worksite raid is clear. Many studies indicate that immigration raids and deportation fear is related to psychological and emotional distress. Several findings show increased behavioral and mental health problems in children following mass raids. When providing this type of care, social workers should consider the role culture has on their clients seeking help. Administering mental health services to immigrant clients may not reflect typical practice. Social workers should practice cultural competency to understand how stigma, language barriers, or background affects an immigrant client's understanding of mental health. This also includes addressing differences in symptom expression between cultures and personal biases that could affect an assessment. Social workers should use cultural awareness and evidence-based practices to provide the best mental health care for their immigrant clients.

9. Future Research

While this study touched on the effects of the Mississippi immigration raids on individuals and families, structure, and the economy, limited data made it difficult to effectively evaluate its influence. Research following future immigration raids should include longitudinal

designs. Examining effects only directly after a mass raid does not allow for a full understanding of how worksite raids can shape individuals or communities.

A common theme throughout research shows that family separation is a common repercussion of raids. Various studies have shown parents have been separated from their children ranging anywhere from days to months. However, it is unclear how many families this affects and for how long these separations take place. A better understanding of the impact and length of separation with regard to ICE raids would be beneficial.

One of the more important needs for future research into the impacts of worksite raids is an evaluation of local economies before and after a mass raid. A common claim throughout studies is that immigrants contribute greatly to the local economy, however, little research has been done to display this statistically. Evidence showing how immigrants contribute to the local economy and how removing them can be detrimental to a local community could be very valuable for immigration reform legislation.

10. Policy

Social workers can partner with other immigrant rights organizations to develop actions toward local, state, and national immigration reforms that aim to protect the rights of immigrant people, decrease unjust enforcement efforts, and promote a pathway to legalization for undocumented people (Delva et al., 2013). Social workers can also lead in opposing the spread of anti-immigrant legislation such as the “Remain in Mexico” program which directs asylum seekers to wait in Mexico or immigration reform that expands interior immigration enforcement and promotes mass raids. They can also play a vital role in promoting programs like Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) or the DREAM act that provides protections and citizenship for immigrants who arrived in the United States as a minor. Social workers can also

advocate for legislation that processes all asylum seekers in a fair manner, recognizing the danger that causes them to seek sanctuary in the states. Policy can play a vital role in a social worker's ability to promote the well-being of immigrant clients.

CONCLUSION

The results of this study concur with previous research done on the impact of immigration raids. Though the actual number of participants was low for solid qualitative evidence, themes throughout the research could be drawn to provide useful implications for social workers. Based on the evidence, conclusions for social work practice were provided in three areas: direct practice, research, and policy. The ten implications suggested by the researcher are intended to be guidelines for working with immigrant populations in the future. As more evidence following the impact of immigration raids becomes available, social workers can better inform their practice.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1-INFORMATION SHEET

INFORMATION SHEET

Title: Mississippi Immigration Raids: Implications for Social Workers

Investigator

Amy Chance
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The University of Mississippi
(601) 325-1560

Advisor

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INCLUDE THE FOLLOWING ONLY IF YOU ARE COLLECTING DATA EXCLUSIVELY FROM
 ADULTS By checking this box I certify that I am 18 years of age or older.

Description

This study will examine the effects of the mass raids in Mississippi on individuals and families, the economy, and community structure. Assessment of need and implications for social work involvement will be explored.

Cost and Payments

There will be no cost or financial incentive to participate.

Risks and Benefits

We do not think that there are any other risks and believe it will be beneficial for participants to have their observations heard.

Confidentiality

The interview will be recorded, with the consent of the participant, then transcribed. All identifying information will be coded to ensure confidentiality, and after the analysis is complete then the recordings will be deleted. None of the information gathered will place participants at risk of criminal or civil liability or damage financial standing, employability, educational advancement, or reputation.

Right to Withdraw

You do not have to take part in this study and you may stop participation at any time. If you start the study and decide that you do not want to finish, all you have to do is to tell Ms. Amy Chance or Dr. Tess Lefmann in person, by letter, or by telephone (contact information listed above). You may skip any questions you prefer not to answer.

IRB Approval

This study has been reviewed by The University of Mississippi's Institutional Review Board (IRB). If you have any questions, concerns, or reports regarding your rights as a participant of research, please contact the IRB at (662) 915-7482 or irb@olemiss.edu.

Statement of Consent

I have read and understand the above information. By completing the survey/interview I consent to participate in the study.

VERIFICACION Y ACUERDO/Verification and Agreement

1. VERIFICO QUE LA INFORMACION ANTERIOR ES CORRECTA/I *verify the information above is correct.*
2. PARA RECIBIR ASISTENCIA, ACEPTO PROPORCIONAR/in *order to receive assistance, I agree to provide:*
 - Nombre, dirección y número de teléfono del propietario de la casa o apartamento en el que vivo
Name, Address and Phone number of owner for the house or apartment in which I live
 - La cantidad de gastos por los cuales soy responsable /*The amount of expenses for which I am responsible*
 - Copia de facturas de servicios públicos con dirección de servicio precisa y cantidad adeudada
Copy of utility bills with accurate service address and amount due
3. AUTORIZO QUE LA INFORMACION DE MI HOGAR SE PUEDA COMPARTIR CON ORGANIZACIONES DE AYUDA HUMANITARIA QUE PUEDEN PROPORCIONAR AYUDA FINANCIERA O APOYO LEGAL A MI FAMILIA. ENTIENDO QUE PUEDO REVOCAR ESTE CONSENTIMIENTO EN CUALQUIER MOMENTO/I *authorize my household information can be shared with humanitarian aid organizations that can provide financial aid or legal support to my family. I understand I may revoke this consent at any time.*

FIRMA DEL JEFE DEL HOGAR/Signature of Head of Household

FECHA/Date

NEEDS ASSESSMENT/PAYMENT AUTHORIZATION FECHA/DATE _____

NOMBRE/Name _____

INFORMACION ACTUALIZADA DEL HOGAR/Updated Household Information

<input type="checkbox"/> NUEVA DIRECCION/New address:
<input type="checkbox"/> CAMBIO DE NUMERO DE ADULTOS Y NIÑOS EN EL HOGAR/Change in numbers of adults and children NUMERO DE ADULTOS/Number of Adults NUMERO DE NIÑOS/Number of Children
<input type="checkbox"/> CAMBIO DE GANANCIAS EN EL HOGAR/Change of earnings in the household ¿CUÁNTO GANAN POR SEMANA?/How much do you earn per week?
<input type="checkbox"/> BENEFICIOS ACTUALES DEL HOGAR/ o SNAP (Food stamps) o Medical insurance (Medicaid, etc.) Current household benefits: o Other:

EVALUACION DE NECESIDADES Y APROBACION/Assessment of Needs and approval

Facturas <i>Bills</i>	Nombre en la Cuenta <i>Name on Account</i>	Numero de cuenta <i>Account Number</i>	Cantidad solicitada <i>Amount requested</i>	Cantidad aprobada <i>Amount approved</i>
<input type="checkbox"/> RENT A/Rent		<input type="checkbox"/> Verificación del propietario recibida <i>Landlord Verification received</i>		
<input type="checkbox"/> SERVICIOS ELECTRICOS <i>Electric Utilities</i>				
<input type="checkbox"/> SERVICIOS de GAS <i>Gas Utilities</i>				
<input type="checkbox"/> SERVICIOS de AGUA <i>Water utilities</i>				
Otras Necesidades/Other Needs				
<input type="checkbox"/> MEDICINA/ SUMINISTROS MEDICOS/Medicine/Medical supplies				
<input type="checkbox"/> TELEFONO/ TARJETA TELEFONICA/Telephone/Phone cards				
<input type="checkbox"/> TARJETAS DE REGALO/Gift Cards				
<input type="checkbox"/> OTROS/Other:				
TOTAL APROBADO/Total approved:				
<input type="checkbox"/> SOLICITUD DENEGADA - MOTIVO/Request denied-Reason o Familia no afectada por redadas/Family is not affected by raids o La familia tiene otros recursos de apoyo/Family has other resources for support <input type="checkbox"/> REFERIDO A LOS SIGUIENTES RECURSOS COMUNITARIOS/Referred to the following community resources:				

Signature of Approval _____ Date _____

LANDLORD VERIFICATION OF RENT

Date: _____

The letter confirms that (name of renter) _____ rents
property from me at the following property address:

Street Address and apt. or unit #: _____

City/State/Zip: _____

The above named renter:

____ Is the sole renter at this property

____ Shares rent with other renters (Number of other renters in the household ____)

The amount of one month's rent is _____ Month/Year rent is due _____

I agree to the following considerations for this month's rent:

____ I agree to the amount of _____ for partial rent payment for the month of
_____.

____ I agree to waiving the late fee of _____

Name of Proprietor: _____

Signature of Proprietor _____

Mailing Address: _____

Email: _____ Phone Number: _____

APPENDIX 3-INTERVIEWS

Interviewee: Dorothy Balsler, MSW

Interviewer: Amy Chance

Date of Interview: 03.10.20

Location of Interview: Catholic Charities, Inc.

List of Acronyms: DB= Dorothy Balsler, IN=Interviewer

[Begin Transcript 00:00:07]

IN: Tell me about your position and how you got involved after the ICE raids.

DB: My position here [Catholic Charities] is Director of Parish and Community Engagement Ministries. That's a mouthful but the acronym is PACEM which is a word in itself that means "peace." So we kinda came to that conclusion that really this position is about engaging our Catholic partners, our Parishes and also our communities.

My job in general is to connect with Parishes in [points to map] that big region. And really encourage and empower them to be engaged in social ministry at the parish level and also to be educated and aware about how to be more involved with putting your faith in action.

So because I am by default the director of our migrant support center and our migrant support center here doesn't focus on refugees. We have a separate program at Catholic Charities for unaccompanied refugee minors. The migrant support center is strictly supporting immigrants who are seeking legal status. So we have an immigration attorney here and an accredited representative that can also provide legal support to fill out documents. So a lot of what our work here is filling out legal paperwork and processing it or sending it off to be processed so people can get legal status.

[00:04:00]

So when the raids hit, my initial involvement was to respond to one of the parish priests in Canton who is the Pastor of Sacred Heart. Many of his Parishioners are Hispanic and they were affected directly by the raids. So he called and said, "There are helicopters all over the place and we don't really know what to do."

So I didn't know what our role at that time would be for Catholic Charities, but I also live in Canton so I said, "Okay, I'll come right up there." We visited for about an hour and talked about different options of how to move forward and support the immigrants, but there was still nothing really in place. And then by the time I got to the office that day it started to become clear because people were calling here just upset. Upset that what they were seeing on TV was that children were being separated from their parents. There were a lot of people calling saying they wanted to help.

We basically started right away putting stuff on our website, trying to organize within ourselves just to respond to those calls that catholic charities would not be placing children in homes. We

were not hearing an immediate call to action for children. There were no children on the streets that did not have a place to go. Until we gained more facts and understood more what our role was going to be, that wasn't something we were gonna do.

But we also wanted to respond to the people. So we started putting information on our website. The Bishop got involved by joining with other Bishops, I think it was the Episcopal, Methodist, and maybe Presbyterian, I'm not sure. There were two or three other Bishops and they wrote a joint letter basically saying "This is not right and we support our immigrant community and this should not be happening."

So still, it was very, very unclear about how Catholic Charities was going to respond. So what ended up happening, and I'm making a long story short here, there were other people coming from all over the country. There were union folks that were associated with the poultry plants, that were coming to help folks the best way they could. There were individual volunteers, there were churches, there were all kinds of folks coming, mostly I think to Sacred Heart in Canton. But there were five centers that had churches that were the main focus.

[00:10:38]

When I jumped in and said "You know people can give directly to Catholic Charities." Immediately, because my role is connected with the churches, I didn't see Catholic Charities providing direct support because we don't have the structure set up for that. But because there were already five sites, I quickly, very quickly within the first couple of days, realized that our role is not to do direct service. Our role is to provide assistance to the Parishes that are providing direct services. So people were coming to them, those people, the immigrants, are not our clients. They are connected to that local church. So the money that we started getting in, we were designating to the Parishes. And so that was what quickly became clear what our role should be.

So that was for the first probably two or three months I would say 80-90% of my time was focused on the work around helping people affected by the raids. It took a lot of relationship building. For me, relationship building is extremely important. I didn't know these parishes very well yet and I didn't want to go into a community assuming that I know everything and how to do stuff. They were already putting together intake forms as best they could, these are not social workers, these are not people trained in social services at all, so that's what I started to offer.

I started to see as I visited places that everybody had a separate intake form. Sometimes they would even change it week to week. They all had a different style or a different way to assess and a different understanding of what the assessment should be. There were five ways to do it. I don't remember when it exactly happened, sometime in the beginning, but then I developed forms that could be used by everybody.

[00:15:57]

We developed through this whole process a way to communicate on an ongoing basis with the churches. They asked for funds, but they also had to report how they used the previous amount of funds. Then I would process the check and send it over there.

Initially, the other piece we were involved with was gathering supplies. At first, we got a big truckload of stuff and we had pallets and we were delivering some things. But we just don't have the personnel for that. As we continued to get supplies, we weren't really getting supplies in big numbers. In order to handle the numbers that were coming through those centers, if we were going to be a central place for that, we would have had to have a whole warehouse. It would have had to be a big, big operation.

The other way that we were involved is through our mental health services. We had one therapist that is bilingual and she had already started getting involved from the very beginning because she is also a part of the community. So she was very involved. She already at that time knew she was going to be resigning. But she extended it a couple of times. She finally did leave in December. So now we do not have bilingual therapists here.

I'll fast forward to the present day. As the manager of this money, I was starting to see the money dwindle. Three of the five sites had about 80 people a month that they were trying to pay for rent and utilities. Canton is more like 60 or so and Laurel is about 20 families. So as you can imagine, rent and utilities to support 80 families is a lot of money. So October was a huge month of requests and the money went down pretty fast. It didn't deplete but I started to see we weren't going to have much left pretty soon.

These church leaders were coming to me saying, "What do we do? We want to continue to be supportive but if we don't have money we can't help." They're seeing it from a real personal direct side. They are seeing these people every week and they are also not sure how much longer this is going to last. So they requested to come together as leaders and basically, collectively decided a process of stepping down the assistance. This step down process has allowed us to stretch the money a little further. So that's where we are at now. It is a little different at each site.

[00:27:23]

The crisis as bad as it is has mobilized people to come out and see that there is a need here. Here's the difference between this crisis and a disaster. I've heard it being compared to a disaster and it's only true because it's a crisis for families. In a disaster when you have people that have access to employment or income, they have to recover but there's a light at the end of the tunnel. We don't know what the future is for these families. There are attorneys still involved. There are plenty of people still in detention, some people have been deported. People still have ankle monitors and they don't know when their court hearings are going to take place. They are sitting in limbo and they don't know where they are going to be able to support their families.

IN: Going back to the beginning, what was the initial aid you were prioritizing? What kind of aid was that? What were the short-term goals or long-term goals in distributing aid?

DB: We weren't that systematic. So it was basically, from my perspective, I did not dictate much of anything except around the parameters of the agreements between us and the coalition. So in our agreement it says utilities and rent and I would go to the individual sites more as a support.

So we didn't even really talk about short-term and long-term goals at that time. We really didn't because we didn't know what the long-term goals would be. It was all short term. It was just do what we can right now and here are the parameters of the assessments.

[00:32:00]

IN: What barriers did you face with distributing the aid?

DB: One of the things that I had heard was with the landlords. Because some people were being evicted, some people who had higher rents weren't getting enough support to pay their full rent. I don't know what the individual circumstances were but it was really dependent on the landlords being nice and understanding.

The other thing that was difficult to navigate sometimes or to figure out who was really responsible for this piece of it. Which was how do we handle complaints? Again, the people on site are not trained social workers. They don't normally do this at all. So people who are receiving the assistance don't always understand why they are not being assisted. Then it becomes the responsibility of the person at the site to then explain a little bit better or to recognize. So that was going on. A hotline was developed. Bottom line is that what that turned into was if someone called the hotline, the hotline is now directing them back to the site.

IN: Was there any problem getting translators initially when the ICE raids hit?

DB: All of these sites are churches that have high populations that are Hispanic. So as far as the Spanish language goes, they were already there. In fact, Carthage is the one that impresses me the most because the people that were volunteering to help the people affected were also affected. They were coming out of their own faith commitment as hard as it was. So those were the very people that were providing the assessment piece. There is still a struggle because 80% of the people affected are from Guatemala and they don't all speak Spanish. So that's where the challenge comes. There is one site where one of the volunteers speaks two or three of the dialects from Guatemala, so that's helpful.

I think if there is a challenge with the translation or the interpretation it's with the people, the Guatemalans that don't understand Spanish, and that may be part of the issue when they don't necessarily understand somebody even speaking Spanish, why they aren't eligible for this assistance or what they are being told.

00:40:01

IN: Thinking more big picture, how have you seen communities as a whole be affected?

DB: I haven't noticed them but I've heard them. So that's what I'm hearing from the communities is that this is affecting our economic status here. I've heard that the plants are not rehiring people to the same numbers that they had. I've heard some plants have closed or are threatening to close. This whole thing is trickling to other areas in the community. Places where people go to shop, if you don't have money you can't go shop. It's affecting communities in

much bigger ways. It is a big picture kind of thing, it's not just affecting this community either, it's much broader than that.

The thing that has not been recognized is how immigrants really have contributed to the economy of these local communities. That's not been recognized. That's not been considered. It's not been talked about a whole lot. Except in small groups and little discussions here and there.

[00:44:11]

IN: Thinking about the role of social workers, what would you say would be helpful for them to know? How can they take initiative and help out?

DB: You know, I'm a social worker and I've learned a lot through this experience myself. I think one thing that I wish I would have been more aware of is just the communities themselves. Now one of the reasons why, personally I didn't know the parishes very well because I was living in Oxford for quite a while and then I had just moved back to this area in March so I didn't really have that much of a chance to get to know people yet. But in general, I would say for any social worker that may be involved with immigrant's period to know who your community is. Where are the immigrants in the community? In terms of being directly involved with this.

On a broader scale, to know the issues. To be educated about the issues so that you can understand. Just come from that perspective, even if you don't agree. Just understand where people are coming and get the facts and don't rely on just hearsay. Be educated and know who your potential clients are.

IN: What would be some policies that social workers could advocate for or be aware of that would be helpful?

DB: DACA is a big one. Anything having to do with immigration reform. That's pretty broad immigration reform covers a lot. And I think also, certainly understand the difference between a refugee and an immigrant because they are totally different. They come into the country in different ways. And around asylum. What are the policies specifically around asylum status and what are the blockages of people currently that seek asylum status because there are definitely a lot of blockages right now a lot of obstacles mostly at the border. So any policy has to do with asylum status or just seeking legal status.

DACA is a big one. Because that's kind of being bounced around all over the place and that affects so many young people that really had no choice. They didn't have a choice whether or not they were going to stay home in their home country or come to the United States and now they are such contributing members of society. So understand it and once you understand it be ready to speak about it when you are given the opportunity to do so.

IN: What do you know now that you wish you would have known? What advice would have been helpful for the future? What advice would you give for people organizing this type of aid to people?

[00:53:17]

DB: Again, I wish I would have known the communities, the individual five communities better from the beginning. I feel like I've built some good relationships with them but it would have been helpful if I already knew them and already knew kinda if that happened what our role would be. Because I had to figure that all out. So that is part of what I wish would have happened. I just wish it didn't happen. It hit us all between the eyes. I just wish it didn't happen.

[00:55:47]

The other thing that is going on right now as the money dwindles is how do we support people to connect with resources. There is no case management. And a case manager as I see it is somebody that would be available to have a caseload of folks that can look at their individual situation and on an individual family basis make a plan. That's not happening. That is definitely lacking right now.

There is one of the coalition members that wrote several grants and has been able to hire some part time people, maybe even full time to meet with folks. They've done some support group stuff, which is wonderful and they have some money for mental health services. But again, that's not affecting all five sites and we don't have a real good plan for that.

[End Transcript 00:56:40]

Interviewee: Fr. Odel Medina S.T

Interviewer: Amy Chance

Date of Interview: 03.23.20

Location of Interview: Telephone

List of Acronyms: OM= Fr. Odel Medina, IN=Interviewer

[Begin Transcript 02:13.68]

IN: If you will, just explain your position and what you do in the community and how you got involved after the ICE raids.

OM: Okay well I am a Catholic Priest and in charge of a Parish here in Carthage. My position is the pastor of the Catholic Church St. Anne's in Carthage, and because of that I believe [is how I got involved], is where people gather the most. Because the people are people of faith, you know? So I know most of them, or all of them I would say. I know almost all of them who were affected by the raids.

So the first place where they tried to reach was church and that was the way I was involved with the raids that day, you know? They came, they called saying, "Father this is happening, this is happening." We didn't believe it but something bad was happening in the community that day. So that's the way I got involved with this.

IN: What would you say were the biggest challenges in the beginning of getting help to these people?

[03:31.94]

OM: Again, I believe it first was to understand what was going on, and what was happening, and where the people were, you know? Because we didn't have enough information, we didn't know nothing. They took the people, but we didn't know where the people were or where they took them. Nobody was answering any questions; nobody was saying they are here or they are there. People were in panic. Families were in panic.

So my first reaction was to go to the office of ICE but they were closed. So what more could we do? We didn't know anything. For maybe 12-18 hours after [the raids] people were so afraid and panicking without knowing anything. The government or the ICE or the federal government didn't answer any questions. So that was the first challenge, to understand what was going on in order to help people. Because if you don't know what is going on how can you help?

IN: So the ICE office wasn't open that day?

OM: No, it was closed. I went there after hearing people talk, because people started calling me. The phone was crazy, one after another, after another. So I said I have to do something. I don't know if you are familiar with the area here. So the office is in Pearl and is like one hour away because nobody answered the phone. If you called them, nobody answered. So I went there but it was closed. When I went there I saw one reporter from one local channel and she told me they just finished a press conference. They told me they have the people at some army base. They have the people at some army base. But they aren't allowing people to reach that place. Also that place was closed.

So I went back to my place without knowing but little by little we were knowing what was happening you know?

[06:34.21]

IN: So once you kinda knew what was going on, what resources did you and your church provide or how did you guys help?

OM: Well the first of course, as a church, we gathered together. Actually I didn't need to call the people, they were here already looking for help, looking for some kind of word or answer. So something that we did was pray. And then we can see what else we can do.

After that day, we started hearing from our organization, Catholic Charities, to support us in this moment to see how we can help the people. The first worry was for the children, because there are a lot of children. And what was happening, they were staying in the daycare or had nowhere to go. That was the worry. So what we did is try to start a network to help with that issue.

IN: Were there any resources that people really needed that you weren't able to locate or provide?

OM: No, because at the beginning, it happened when they had just received their last pay. So they already had pay for their rent and their food, for that week at least. But that eventually would become a problem: rent, utilities, bills, and food.

So immediately after, the media came for interviews looking for information. People from all over started to call us and see how they could help these people. So Catholic Charities, an organization with our church, right away answered me and said "Father, we will help you with money to support these people in this circumstance." So that is when we started creating kind of a program for supporting financial necessities.

IN: So now what does your help look like present day?

[09:36.25]

OM: Yeah some of the people have gone back to work, like irregular work, not like work like they were. But many of them have work, but we are still helping them with perishables and utilities and rent. And also organizations created a program for the whole year with psychological assistance like a retreat. It's like a healing process for the family and children. It's like a holistic program to help them to process this trauma, because really it was a trauma for everyone.

IN: What do you think communities could do better to prepare for this type of event? Or what do you wish would have happened to help lessen the trauma that occurred?

OM: You know, having good information. Although that was something nobody was expecting... I believe as a community if we have more... although we are trying to inform people more about their rights about their situation. I think sometimes people don't expect this to happen to them so they don't pay attention when we try to inform them. So maybe with more information and community organization that will be better in other moments or other communities.

I believe because we are a church, it will be a good place where people will look for help in moments like that. Because they are hearing about the church and they feel supported by the church. So I believe that's a good place to begin organization.

IN: How would you like to see things change moving forward?

[12:43.05]

OM: By now, thanks be to God, right now in the system, I believe that some people can fight for their case. Because some people have been here more than twenty, fifteen, ten or so years. So

many of these people will be able to fight and prove that they are worthy to be here and get the right document to stay here. I believe that many of them will get it.

The only thing that I would like to see better is to be aware of the community, the Hispanic community... We are a small community, we are growing, at least. The first generation have been here in the states for 18- 20 years. We are a very young community in Mississippi. We are not like Texas or California or New York or those states. We here in Mississippi, we are small. There has to be education for the very small, more fragile, vulnerable people. Not only in the Hispanic community, but also people from here.

This was a more Federal issue than a State issue. The State organizations were so upset because they know these people are hard workers and they are good for the economy in the state. So I can see what annoys the people. It was the federal government that came and made this terrible situation. There are local people that it will affect not only their family but also the economy of the state. If we are more aware, we will be better able to help each other better.

IN: My last question is just thinking about the role of social workers, with your experience on the frontlines, do you have any advice for social workers?

OM: I believe that social workers can help with children, programs with children and maybe with parents. But the limitation is the language barrier. We are in Mississippi, we don't have, I don't know how many social workers who speak Spanish, who would be able to work with parents. But at least with children, they can make some sort of program to help them and educate them on their civic rights for the youth and the children.

IN: That's a really good point. Is there anything else you would like to add?

OM: I believe we are aware of what these people bring to local communities. These people bring us a lot of good things, the communities. If we are aware of that we will try to help. These people are a worthy people, a people of faith, and they are worthy to be with us.

[End Transcript 18:08.61]

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