

Paige Gilbert

Social Problems

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### ChiEAC Research Assistant Reflection

#### **Question 1:**

It helped me further understand the specific problems migrant and refugee families face related to accessing education. I now understand that the barriers they face are not just getting enrolled into school but also accessing translation services, special education referrals, and access to resources that represent their cultural background, which can help migrant and refugee children reduce isolation and a sense of belonging and connectedness to their academic environment. I have been aware of migrant and refugee struggles with accessing education, but after reflection, I can see why access to culturally responsive academic resources plays such a large part in setting these children up for success. This is because students are more likely to engage with their learning when they feel connected to it. These resources and accommodations prevent these children from feeling isolated and increase their sense of belonging and chances of success in an educational environment.

**Question 2:**

It helped me understand that things I own but do not use may seem obsolete to me, but I can use them to help people who require those resources. When I or a person close to me decides that there are things we do not see as valuable, we can make them valuable by giving them to people in need. In recent years, I have tried not to engage with materialistic culture and limit waste in my life in various ways, but it is also important to educate others around me that the things they own but do not use have value by giving back to the communities and people around us. It is very important to assist those who are in more need of those materials. Many may see spare change around the house as simple spare change, but in reality, that spare change might not be much, but it can be an impactful way to give back to the community. Shifting our mindset and learning how much the items around us truly can be can impact people in our communities can be a very impactful way to give back to those who need them more than us.

**Question 3:**

The second study resonated with me most personally as a college student. In my pursuit of higher education, it has made me value my opportunity to learn and educate myself, and first-generation immigrant families should also be able to have that chance to further their education and academic goals. The public perception of the value of a college degree and the personal value of a college degree vary. Immigrant families should have the opportunity to pursue a college degree, and also have opportunities to get an entry-level job if they do not want a college degree. Receiving a college degree takes lots of time, effort, and money, so collecting data from students and non-students gives insight into the practicality of pursuing that goal.

These first-generation immigrant families should have the opportunity if they want to pursue a college degree, but surveying the public provides valuable data on how to advise immigrant families on their career goals and choices.

**Question 4:**

It helped me understand the importance of working together as a community to address these issues rather than addressing these issues in a disjointed group. Because of the involvement we all had together, focusing on these problems as a community helped motivate us all to contribute together. The combined efforts created stronger success by focusing our goal as a group on a specific problem. Unfortunately, there are limitations to how we can help because assisting others with these complex issues, like educational access and getting an individual a job. These are not as simple as allowing a person entry into these opportunities because many are not the ones who decide to give a person a job or accept a person into an educational institution. Even though most of us don't have the power to do those things, donating money to fund accommodations is valuable for helping people and families who struggle with these complex issues increases their likelihood of success. And coordinating a group of people to help together can create a pathway for these people's ability to access these opportunities.

**Question 5:**

I have always been interested in giving back to others because of my interest in sociology, by learning about these simple ways I can help others has inspired me to take further

steps to assist those who are in need in various ways. Being educated on ways I can help those who are near me has made me want to extend my help to a greater extent. I want to help those who have struggled with similar issues because my insight into those issues can provide value based on my experience. And even if I can not relate to another person's struggles, I still can help them in various ways. I will be supporting others by continuing the practices we did in class, donating money and clothing, in the future. And educating others on the value of doing these practices the same way we did in class.