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8-6

Humanities

Mr. McNeice

### Immigrants' Relation to the United States Economy

“Blaming the immigrants for the nation’s woes has long been an American pastime, especially in hard economic times like today” (ACLU). There is so much immigrants have done to benefit their community’s economy that many fail to see. SDG 8 focuses on improving economic growth through decent, productive work, aiming to have decent work conditions and employment for all before the year 2030. Working through many problems with employment rates and working conditions in small communities, by helping to open new job opportunities and taking actions to improve work-life conditions, these actions quickly work towards a global scale, significantly affecting economic and GDP (Gross Domestic Product) growth for many countries, strengthening connections with others through economy. Communities in the United States can improve economic issues for immigrants and for all by providing more opportunities for immigrants, while also improving everyday problems, whether it is work life balance or biases from native-American workers, in turn improving economic growth and sustainability, with decent and productive work, locally and nationally, while also strengthening economic connections with other countries globally.

Did you know that immigrants make up over 17% of the work force in the United States? But they are still challenged with many problems such as systemic barriers, poor economic

stability, as well as biases from native-American citizens. Many of these include regulatory policy, employer racial prejudice, international qualifications, and unequal access to workforce training, according to Benjamin at The Forum Network. However, many organizations are helping improve these issues with social impact programs, philanthropic activities, as efforts to advance equity and inclusion. Although immigrants have significantly improved economic growth and productivity in the United States, the American citizens still blame them for many occurring economic issues. “Experts note that immigrants are blamed for unemployment because Americans can see the jobs immigrants fill but not that jobs they create through productivity, capital formation and demand for goods and services” (American Civil Liberties Union). In addition to all of this, newly arrived immigrants have come due to issues such as war and corruption in their home country, meaning that their levels of education are low and may have misunderstandings about living in a new country. According to Nuñez at ‘Global Citizen,’ some key issues immigrants face in the United States are difficulty with language as well as securing work and education, all factors contributing to the poor economic mobility and stability of immigrants.

Even when faced against all these challenges, these immigrants have continued to be hard-working. But how have they improved the economy in the United States, and why is it important? The native-American citizens see the immigrants filling many job opportunities in the community but fail to see all the new ones that they create through job productivity, often outperforming many of their American coworkers. Many see immigrants as the workers, and not the creators. Recent studies by researchers at MIT and the University of Pennsylvania look at immigrants that are entrepreneurs and founders of companies, rather than workers and employees. The studies showed that immigrants create more higher-leveled companies than

native-born Americans leading to a different conclusion. Ben Jones, a professor of strategy working with the researchers, reports, “Immigrants actually create more jobs than they take.” Apart from helping to increase employment rates, their work also has a massive contribution to their communities. Studies from Penn Wharton, University of Pennsylvania, show that immigrants have significantly increased the supply of materials from labor work, which in turn helps generate even more jobs. Furthermore, it has been found that states with more foreign-born workers, such as New Jersey, have a significantly faster production rate from jobs. Studies made by CBPP in 2018 indicate that the work force created by immigrants are much more impactful on the economy of the United States by finding that the labor force participation rate of foreign-born adults was 65.7%, surprising to many, higher than the native-born American workers with 62.3%. The study also presented us with shocking employment rates of 63.4% of all foreign-born adults, higher than the 59.8% native-born American adults. “Immigrants hold jobs that are important to our economy and communities,” reports Sherman from CBPP, “Immigrants help fill key gaps in the U.S. economy.”

Even though there are many hard working and productive immigrants, there are still many who have had a poor education, poor economic mobility, and many other issues. These immigrants may have trouble producing good, productive work at jobs, and there are many ways that we can help these lower skilled workers. “One out of ten people in the world – around 766 million people – still lived below the extreme poverty line in 2013. Most of them, 80 percent, live in rural areas and have extremely low productivity jobs” (World Bank Blogs). According to World Bank Blogs, many people who are living in poverty or are less fortunate are constantly working incredibly low productivity jobs, with extremely low wages. Fortunately, policymakers are working on systems that can help increase production in these jobs, whilst increasing wages

as well as connecting these workers to a more successful job market, increasing the economic benefits in these communities. These actions improve these less fortunate people's lives, entering more productive labor markets, as well as helping them to establish sustainable self-employment systems. “[Immigrants] face unique challenges when it comes to balancing work and family demands,” claims Muse from ScienceDirect. Many immigrant workers have trouble balancing their home and work lives, with the many challenges and inequalities they face. This often leads to less production when they are working. ScienceDirect finds that lower-skilled workers have different, less access to important work and family resources rather than workers in higher paying jobs, leading to much difficulty in providing productive work at jobs. BrainyHR, a fast-growing company specialized in helping with organization and flexibility of small companies, notes two methods of training which are “practical, and at the same time, impatient with employees for additional financial resources.” These being, continuous assessment of strengths and weaknesses of all employees, as well as providing coaching and constant feedback from higher-skilled, more experienced workers.

SDG 8 aims to improve economic stability and growth while also ensuring productivity and decent work for all. Unfortunately, many immigrants, not just in the United States, are unable to experience the effects of SDG 8 yet, but there are many ways to help them, such as providing more opportunities and helping with work-life balance, in turn improving the economic growth and stability of many communities. Economy is the core of many communities globally, and with economic growth comes better daily lives for all, particularly for the unlucky immigrants who must live lives of hard work due to the lack of economic mobility and sustainability.

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