Policy Participation as Indicators of Inner Borders within the United States

Geena M. Flores and Dr. Kristen B. Crossney, Dept. of Geography & Planning, West Chester University

Abstract

Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals was a landmark immigration policy announced in 2012. Variations in application rates provide insight into how our communities treat and perceive immigrants, and they are conceptually explained by legal, economic, and cultural factors at the state level. This project uses discriminant analysis to examine these underlying legal, economic, and cultural factors amongst regions identified by differing application rates to explain the variation. Differences in application rates of states and the corresponding legal, economic, and cultural factors indicate the existence of sub regions and the persistent inner borders.

Important Sources

Licona, Adela C., and Marta Maria Maldonado. 2013. "The Social Production of Latin@ Visibilities and Invisibilities: Geographies of Power in Small Town America." *Antipode* 46 no. 2: 517-536.

What is Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA)?

Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals is administered by U. S Citizenship and Immigration Services following President Obama's Executive Order issued on June 15, 2012. This voluntary program allows youth between the ages of 15 and 31 who came to the United States before age 16 and have resided here for at least 5 years to apply to receive a reprieve from deportation, work authorization, a social security number, and, in most cases, a driver's license.
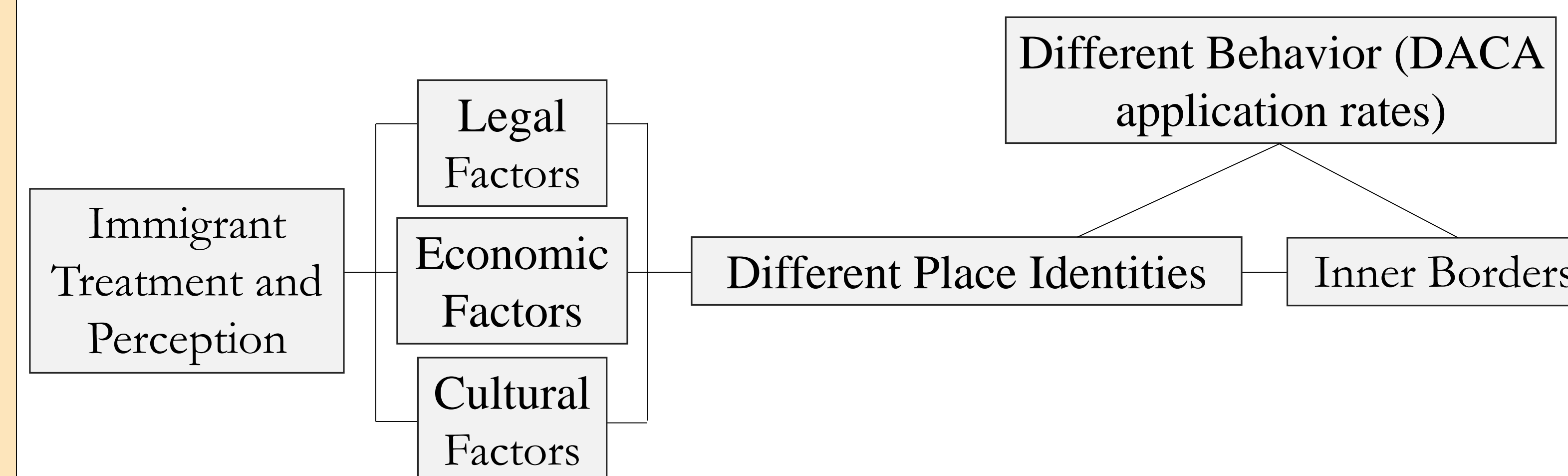
"We are a better nation than one that expels innocent young kids."

propresobama.org

Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals ➡ Inner Borders

Hypothesis

An analysis of immigrant treatment and perception factors will help to explain differences in behavior and variation in the application rates of DACA. Immigrant Treatment and Perception is best explained by legal, economic, and cultural factors, and it varies across inner borders and regions within the United States.

Immigrant Treatment and Perception → Legal Factors / Economic Factors / Cultural Factors → Different Place Identities → Inner Borders → Different Behavior (DACA application rates)

Methods

States were assigned a region based on DACA application rate quartiles, and Discriminant Analysis was run to identify distinguishing characteristics.

Table 1: Region by Function

	1	2	3
1	**-2.134**	0.675	0.552
2	-0.861	-1.217	-0.831
3	**1.403**	**1.077**	-0.660
4	**1.652**	-0.681	0.947

Table 2: Variables by Function

	1	2	3
Threat of Deportation posed by local law enforcement	**0.411**	-0.218	-0.061
Northeast	**-0.404**	0.158	0.236
Percentage of families living below the poverty level	**0.400**	0.223	**-0.368**
Per capita personal income 2012	**-0.395**	-0.070	0.036
Percentage of Hispanics below the poverty level	0.258	0.224	0.000
Percentage of workforce that is undocumented(prior to DACA)	0.249	0.075	0.068
Percent of illegal immigration population within state	0.248	0.037	0.117
Percent attaining a Bachelors Degree plus	-0.234	0.037	0.107
Percent Hispanic	0.213	0.004	0.150
Midwest	0.056	**-0.319**	-0.094
Unemployment rate	0.148	**0.313**	-0.272
Percent who said: Allow police to question anyone they think may be in the country illegally	0.197	-0.227	0.135
Urban percentage of population	0.054	-0.144	0.035
South	0.121	0.097	**-0.301**
Percent not attaining High School	0.265	0.212	-0.274
Percent white	-0.001	-0.182	0.264
West	0.119	0.088	0.232
Republican Governor in 2012	0.135	-0.116	0.226
Immediately eligible youth	0.111	0.111	-0.147

Results and Conclusions

- Function 1 discriminates Region 1 from Region 3 and 4, and shows that Region 1 is similar to Region 2 in terms of less threat of deportation, lower poverty rates, and higher per capita income. Meanwhile, function 1 shows that Region 3 and 4 are very similar to each other. Function 2 discriminates well between Region 2 and Region 3, and suggests that Region 1 is more similar to Region 3 while Region 4 is more similar to Region 2 with respect to unemployment rates and being in the Midwest.

- There are geographic regional differences in DACA rates, which is likely explained by underlying differences in legal, cultural, and economic factors. The Northeast and Midwest Regions are statistically significantly related to Functions 1 and 2 respectively, and the South is related to Function 3.

- Region 1 is best defined by having a low threat of deportation posed by local law enforcement, being in the Northeast, having a low percent of families living in poverty, and having high income. Region 2 is best defined by being in the Midwest and having low unemployment. Region 3 is best defined by not being in the Northeast or Midwest, having a high threat of deportation posed by local law enforcement, having a high percentage of families living in poverty, having low income, and having high unemployment. Region 4 is best defined by having a high threat of deportation posed by local law enforcement, not being in the Northeast, having a high percentage of families living in poverty, and having low income.

- Inner borders, as indicated on the map where different regions meet, exist because of these different ruling influential factors.

DACA Application Rate by State

Legend

Deferred Action 2 Year Application Rate
Application Rate of Immdeiately Eligible Youth

- Region 1: 1.47- 37.68
- Region 2: 37.69- 52.20
- Region 3: 52.21 - 72.72
- Region 4: 72.73- 98.80