



# EXPLORING CORRELATES OF CRITICAL MOTIVATION AMONG ASIAN IMMIGRANT-ORIGIN ADOLESCENTS IN THE U.S.: INCORPORATING A SOCIOPOLITICAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK



Gloria Kang (Faculty Advisor, Andrea Negrete Ph.D.)  
Department of Psychology, Wesleyan University

## INTRODUCTION

- Despite Asians' significant demographic expansion and surge in anti-Asian hate crimes in the past decade, research and literature on the psychosocial experiences of Asian Americans is lacking.
- Employing the sociopolitical development theory, I examine factors that may be influential in shaping Asian immigrant-origin youths' motivation to create social and political change.
- The study examined whether different state inclusionary and exclusionary immigration policies moderated the relationship between immigrant youths' *Anger about Social Injustice*, *Trust in the American Promise*, *Critical Reflection*, and *Knowing an Undocumented Immigrant* on *Critical Motivation*.
- Referencing CC theory as a core theory in this study, I use SPD as a theoretical framework to connect the possible predictors of critical motivation while adapting the Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory.

## METHODS

### Sample

- Data for the present study draws from a one-time cross-sectional survey called "The Immigrant Youth Identity and Socialization Study."
- The present study's sample consisted of 302 immigrant-origin adolescents who identified as Asian whose ages ranged from 14 to 18 years.

### Data Analysis Plan

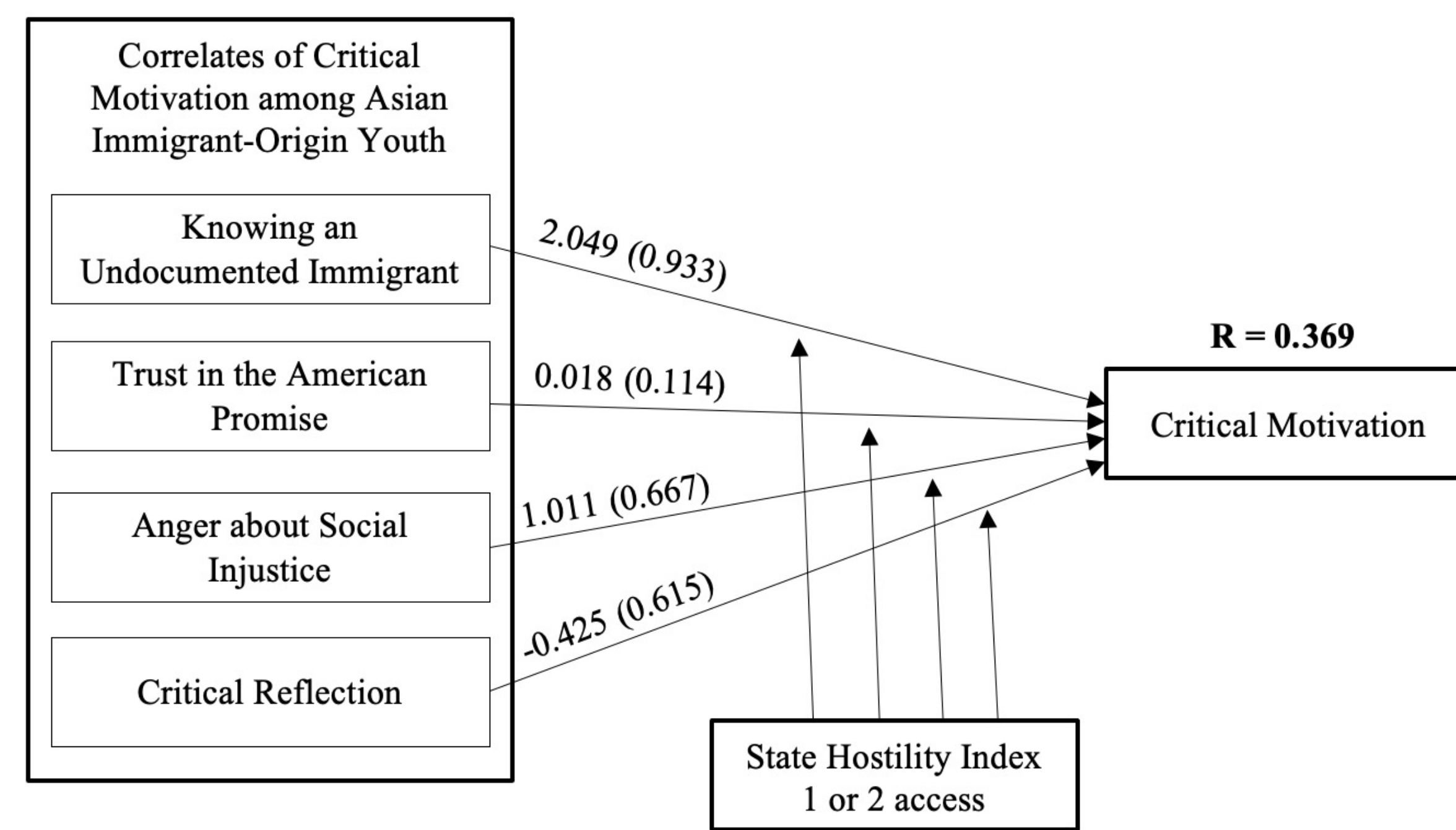
- Hierarchical linear regression analysis in SPSS
- A Sidak post-hoc comparison test was conducted to further understand the significant interaction.

### Measures

- Knowing an Undocumented Immigrant: 0 =No, 1 =Yes, and Prefer not to answer was recoded as missing data (Vargas et al., 2019).
- Trust in the American Promise: 3 items on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from "Strongly Disagree" to "Strongly Agree" (Flanagan et al., 2007).
- Anger about Social Injustice: 3 items on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from "Strongly Disagree" to "Strongly Agree" (Flanagan et al., 2007).
- Critical Reflection: 4 items on a 6-point Likert scale (1 = Strongly disagree, 6 = Strongly agree). Subscores were summed where higher ratings meant an increased perception of inequality. (ShoCCS; Diemer et al., 2020).
- The State Hostility Index measured the accessibility of three services relevant to immigrant adolescents: (1) state financial aid policy, (2) in-state tuition policy, and (3) driver's license obtainment policy.
- Critical Motivation: 4 items on a 6-point Likert scale (1 = Strongly disagree, 6 = Strongly agree). Subscores were summed to create a composite score (ShoCCS; Diemer et al., 2020).

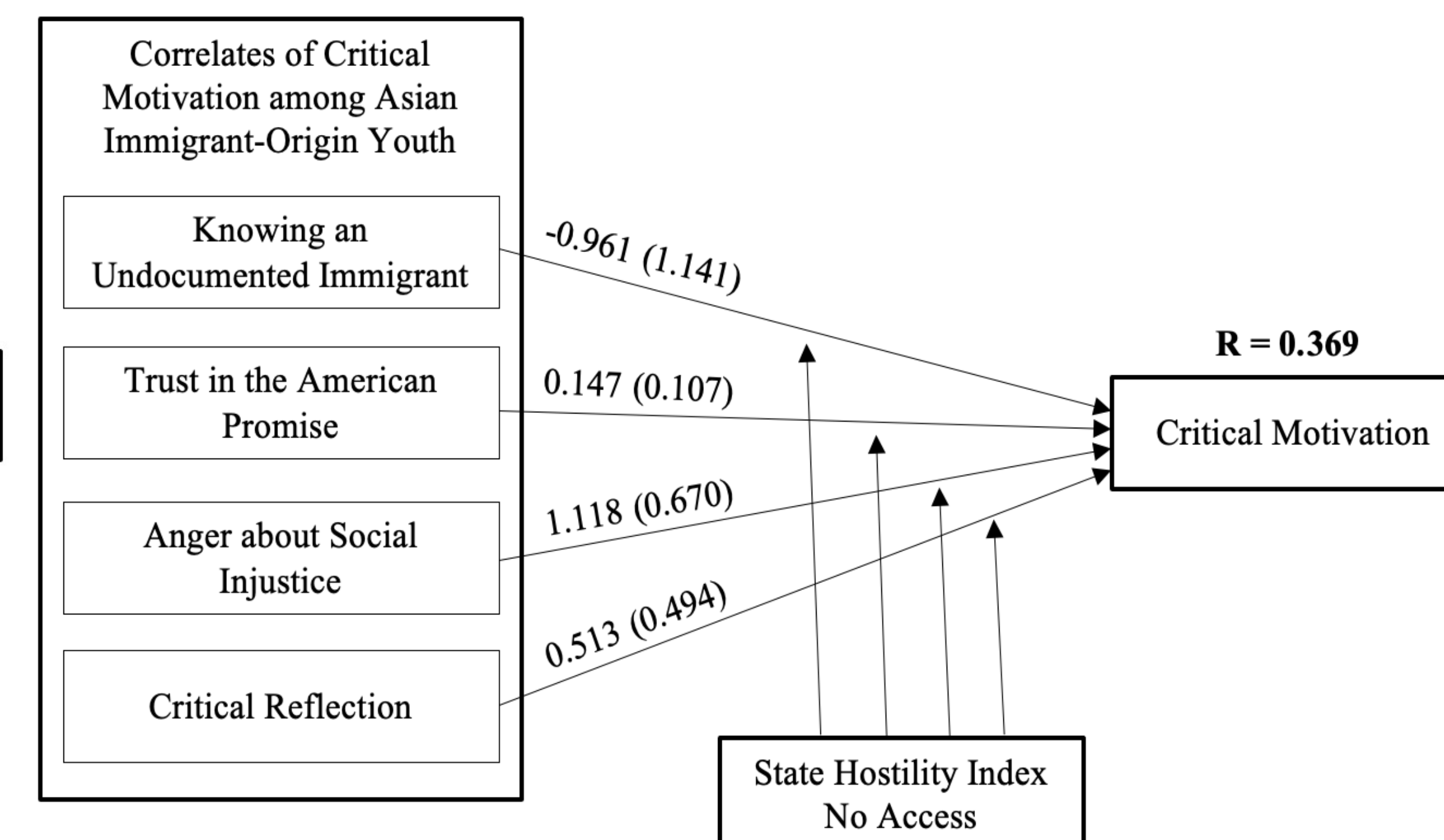
**Anger about social injustice** and **critical reflection** is significantly associated with more **critical motivation**. **State hostility** moderated the relationship between **knowing an undocumented immigrant** and critical motivation.

Figure 1. Conceptual Model of Study Variables in States with Access to 1 or 2 Services



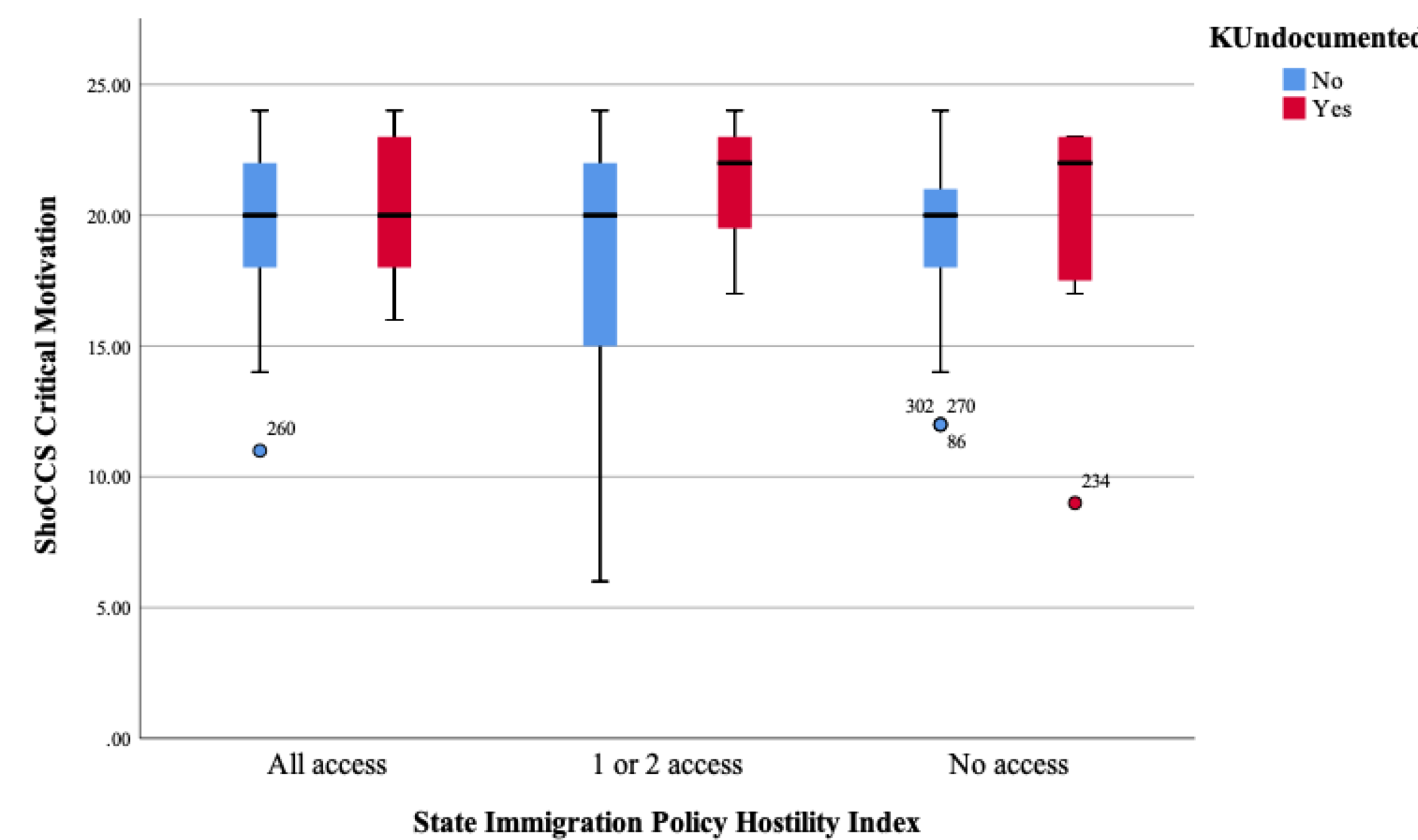
Note. Covariates of age and immigrant generation status were considered for analysis

Figure 2. Conceptual Model of Study Variables in States with No Access to Services



Note. Covariates of age and immigrant generation status were considered for analysis

Figure 3. Boxplot of Significant Interaction Critical Motivation by Hostility of State-level Immigration Policy By Knowing an Undocumented Immigrant



## DISCUSSION

- My findings are consistent with research that anger, as an emotion, can serve as a motivating mechanism to "mobilize critical action and social behavior" (van Doorn et al., 2014).
- The study findings reinforce a contextualized pathway showing how the *Critical Reflection* process among Asian immigrant-origin adolescents may consist of perceiving unjust systems of racism, xenophobia, and anti-immigrant sentiments to play a role in their *Critical Motivation* (Diemer and Li, 2011; Vargas et al., 2017).
- The moderating effect may be a result of adolescents being cognizant of existing outlets and proactive community organizations that advocate for policies supporting undocumented immigrants.
- If an individual has some form of knowledge that they may have some "power" to play a role in enacting change, this idea can also motivate individuals to join such efforts.

## STUDY IMPLICATIONS/CONCLUSION

- With the increase in hate crimes against this population, there is urgency to understand the SPD of Asian immigrant-origin adolescents as they grow in the American society among their non-immigrant youth counterparts in school and communities.
- *Critical motivation* of Asian immigrant-origin adolescents can be impacted through macrosystems such as immigration policies by state and respective microsystems.
- Importantly, we study the correlates of *Critical Motivation* to encourage civic engagement as it can be used to empower youth to impact health and well-being (Korich, F., & Fields, E. L., 2023).
- Future researchers should explore the myriad experiences of this population with a multifaceted and intersectional approach.
- I hope this research empowers Asian immigrant-origin youth as they explore their identities, begin to make meaning of who they are living in the U.S., and find ways to navigate their world.

## REFERENCES

- Diemer, M. A., Frisby, M. B., Pinedo, A., Bardelli, E., Elliot, E., Harris, E., ... & Voight, A. M. (2020). Development of the short critical consciousness scale (ShoCCS). *Applied Developmental Science, 1-17*.
- Diemer, M. A., & Li, C.-H. (2011). Critical Consciousness Development and Political Participation Among Marginalized Youth. *Child Development, 82(6)*, 1815-1833.
- Flanagan, C. A., Syversten, A. K., & Stout, M. D. (2007). *Civic measurement models: Tapping adolescents' civic engagement*. Washington, DC: Center for Information and Research on Civic Learning and Engagement.
- Korich, F., & Fields, E. L. (2023). Civic Engagement to Empower Young People to Impact Health and Well-Being. *Pediatrics, 151(Supplement 1)*, e2022057267H.
- van Doorn, J., Zeelenberg, M., & Breugelmanns, S. M. (2014). Anger and Prosocial Behavior. *Emotion Review, 6(3)*, 261-268.
- Vargas, Edward D., Juárez, Melina, Sanchez Gabriel R., Livaudais, Maria (2019). Latinos' connections to immigrants: how knowing a deportee impacts Latino health. *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies, 45(15)*, 2971-2988.
- Vargas, E. D., Sanchez, G. R., & Juárez, M. (2017). Fear by Association: Perceptions of Anti-Immigrant Policy and Health Outcomes. *Journal of Health Politics, Policy and Law, 42(3)*, 459-483. <https://doi.org/10.1215/03616878-3802940>

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to thank Prof. Negrete for her mentorship and support. I would also like to thank Prof. Kabacoff and Prof. Rose in the QAC for all their insight and help.