Local Policing and the Educational Outcomes of Undocumented College Students

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Abstract: A growing literature examines the impact of immigration and law enforcement on undocumented immigrants and their communities, but these studies are limited by the lack of reliable data on documentation status and their focus on federal immigration enforcement. Leveraging administrative student data from the City University of New York (CUNY) that reliably identify about 13,000 undocumented students among more than 350,000 first-year students, this article examines whether local policing practices that do not ostensibly target undocumented immigrants can affect the educational outcomes of undocumented young adults. Focusing on police stops around university campuses under the New York City Police Department's Stop, Question, and Frisk program, our findings show a substantial negative effect of police stops around campus on course credits for undocumented men but no impact on GPA or on the likelihood of receiving zero credits in the following term (stop-out). The negative effect is larger for Black and South Asian undocumented young men, groups that experience heightened surveillance by the local police. In contrast, campus police stops have little effect on documented students or undocumented women. The results illustrate how local policing practices, even in so-called sanctuary cities, can have chilling effects on undocumented groups with important implications for the links between the criminal justice system, immigration, and social inequality.

Keywords: undocumented immigrant; stop and frisk; proactive policing; education

THE forcible removal of foreign-born individuals from the United States reached unprecedented levels during the last three decades, marking this period in U.S. history as the age of mass deportation (Golash-Boza 2015; Massey and Pren 2012). Mass deportation was made possible by increasing interior enforcement and "crimmigration," the convergence of the criminal justice and immigration systems that allowed for the devolution of immigration enforcement from the federal level to the local level (Martínez et al. 2018; Stumpf 2006). A growing research literature examines the consequences of federal policies that explicitly target immigrants for detention and deportation for the health, educational, and related outcomes of immigrants (Amuedo-Dorantes et al. 2018; Garcia 2019; Patler and Gonzalez 2021; Potochnick et al. 2017). Considerably less attention has been paid to how local policing practices, that may not be ostensibly aimed at deporting immigrants, can nonetheless instill fear in immigrant communities and disrupt daily life. In fact, local policing practices may have more far-reaching effects than federal immigration enforcement practices for two key reasons. First, changes to legislation, such as the passage of the Antiterrorism and Effective Death Penalty Act of 1996 (AEDPA) and the Illegal Immigration Reform and Immigrant Responsibility Act of

1996 (IIRIRA), raised the stakes for everyday encounters with law enforcement by expanding the set of deportable crimes and imposing mandatory deportation with no judicial review to any foreign-born individual convicted of aggravated felony (Fragomen and Bell 2007). Second, minority groups are at disproportional risk of contact with local police with important implications for many immigrants. Indeed, immigrants might be more likely to come in contact with local police than with immigration authorities, particularly in urban areas and so-called sanctuary cities that have actively tried to limit cooperation with federal immigration authorities. This highlights the importance of the criminal justice–to–deportation pipeline.

Research on the consequences of federal and local law enforcement activities for immigrant communities is further constrained by the lack of reliable data on immigration status, which compels researchers either to infer immigration status from country of birth or focus on the impact of federal immigration enforcement on Latinos more broadly (e.g., Amuedo-Dorantes and Lopez 2015; Potochnick et al. 2017; Santillano et al. 2020; Watson 2014). The result of this approach leads not only to less precise estimates but also to the inability to examine non-Latino undocumented groups such as undocumented Black and Asian immigrants, which make up a growing share of the undocumented population (Passel and Cohn 2019a).

To address these gaps in the literature, we examine the effect of proactive policing on the educational outcomes of undocumented college students in New York City (NYC). Specifically, we examine the NYC Police Department's Stop, Question, and Frisk (SQF) program that has stopped and briefly detained millions of pedestrians over the last two decades. The SQF program was a prominent proactive policing policy that used police stops of pedestrians with the goal of targeting low-level crimes and minor forms of disorderly behavior (Zimring 2013). Our study merges data on the universe of SQF operations conducted between 2006 and 2014 with administrative data from the City University of New York (CUNY), the largest urban public university system in the United States. Our data includes information on immigration status of CUNY students because undocumented CUNY students seeking to pay in-state tuition must provide a notarized affidavit stating that they reside in the country without documentation (City University of New York 2022). Using these data allows us to examine the effect of exposure to police stops around college campuses on the educational outcomes of more than 350,000 CUNY first-year students, 13,041 of them undocumented. Importantly, the sample includes a growing segment of the undocumented population that is rarely studied such as Black, South Asian, and Chinese immigrants.

Our findings show a substantial negative effect of campus police stops on course credits for undocumented men but no impact on GPA or on the likelihood of receiving zero credits in the following term (stop-out). This effect is more pronounced among Black and to a smaller extent Asian undocumented men with tentative evidence that Pakistani and Bangladeshi students experience the largest negative effect among Asian men. In contrast, campus police stops have small or no effects on documented students or undocumented women. These findings are consistent with avoidance strategies among undocumented students, who are at highest risk of being stopped by the police. The results illustrate that local policing in the form of police stops and related police tactics negatively affect the educational outcomes

of undocumented men. Our study is among the first to examine the impact of immigration and law enforcement across various ethnoracial groups and to consider differential effects across Asian subcategories. The findings contribute to the understanding of the links between the criminal justice system, immigration, and social inequality.

Policing, Crimmigration, and the Education of Undocumented Students

Unauthorized immigrants have the right to public education in the K-12 system, but there is no comparable legal protection for post-secondary education, and states differ regarding policies that enable or restrict undocumented students to enroll or receive tuition support and financial aid (National Conference of State Legislatures 2015).[1] Partly as a result, undocumented immigrants with a high school diploma are less likely to enter college compared with U.S.-born residents (Passel and Cohn 2019b). However, undocumented students who enter college despite these challenges are more academically prepared and attain higher grades in their first semester in college compared with their peers who have citizenship or legal permanent residency (Hsin and Ortega 2018; Hsin and Reed 2020; Kresiberg and Hsin 2021).

Although educational institutions tend to be more welcoming and protective environments than workplaces (Gleeson and Gonzales 2012), the threat of deportation looms large in the life of undocumented college students. Here we focus on the impact of local policing on the educational outcomes of undocumented college students. Our argument is informed by two parallel literatures that examine the effects of the criminal justice system and crimmigration on individuals and their communities. This work points at key mechanisms that explain the importance of local policing for the educational outcomes of undocumented students.

First, a growing body of work examines the effect of crimmigration on immigrants and immigrant communities by primarily focusing on the consequences of federal immigration enforcement. Although immigration authorities publicly state that the purpose of immigration enforcement is to remove violent criminal migrants, nearly half of the individuals targeted for removal resulted from arrest for nonviolent misdemeanors or traffic violations (Capps et al. 2011). The two hallmark programs of federal and local partnerships were 287(g), which deputized state and local police to enforce federal immigration policies by allowing them to arrest individuals whom they believed were in violation of immigration policies, and Secure Communities, a program that allowed local police to search federal databases for immigration violations and hold individuals in custody for suspected immigration-related violations. A large body of research shows that adoption of these two programs reduced public school enrollment of Hispanic children (Amuedo-Dorantes and Lopez 2015; Dee and Murphy 2020), decreased the average achievement of Hispanic and Black students (Amuedo-Dorantes and Lopez 2015; Bellows 2021), raised poverty levels (e.g., Amuedo-Dorantes et al. 2018), and increased the food and housing insecurity of Hispanic households (e.g., Amuedo-

Dorantes et al. 2018; Potochnick et al. 2017; Rugh and Hall 2016). Additional research demonstrates that apprehensions and detentions by Customs and Border Protection agents along the border (e.g., Amuedo-Dorantes et al. 2021; Brabeck and Xu 2010; Patler and Gonzalez 2021) and immigration raids conducted by U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (e.g., Amuedo-Dorantes and Antman 2022; Bellows 2021; Capps et al. 2007; Lopez et al. 2017; Novak et al. 2017; Santillano et al. 2020) negatively affect the social and economic outcomes of immigrant families.

Second, a related but separate literature explores the detrimental effects of direct and indirect contact with local police on Black and Latino residents, particularly when this contact is interpreted as invasive and discriminatory (Fagan and Geller 2015; Kirk and Papachristos 2011; Legewie and Cricco 2022; Legewie and Fagan 2019; Tyler et al. 2014). Excessive pedestrian stops and police harassment elevate stress levels and cause physical and mental health problems in targeted individuals (Geller et al. 2014; Sugie and Turney 2017) with potential negative consequences for educational outcomes (Del Toro et al. 2022). The negative effect of proactive policing can extend to the family members of targeted individuals and their communities at large by eroding confidence in the criminal justice system (Anderson 2000; Rios 2011; Shedd 2015). System avoidance is another well-established consequence of proactive policing. Individuals avoid institutions that keep formal records (i.e., put them in "the system") because these may increase the risk of surveillance and apprehension by authorities (Brayne 2014). For example, Legewie and Fagan (2019) demonstrate how Operation Impact, a program adopted by the New York City Police Department (NYPD) that increased the intensity of aggressive policing in select neighborhoods, negatively affected the academic performance of Black boys in middle school. Legewie and Fagan offer evidence that the underlying mechanism linking policing to academic outcomes was the erosion of trust in schools and system avoidance. Other research similarly shows the negative impact of both school-level exposure to police stops (Bacher-Hicks and Campa 2020) and incidents of police violence (Ang 2021) on the educational outcomes of high school students.

Together, these two lines of research highlight the potential influence of law enforcement activities on both ethnoracial minorities and immigrant populations. We argue that a particularly important process in the context of undocumented immigrants is system avoidance or the tendency of individuals to avoid institutions that keep formal records. The risk of surveillance and fear of apprehension by authorities is particularly acute for individuals targeted for deportation and their family members, even those with legal residency. Supporting this argument, U.S. citizens who live with undocumented family members reduce their Medicaid enrollment and utilization of health care services for fear that contact with surveillant institutions will expose undocumented family members to immigration authorities (Perreira and Pedroza 2019; Watson 2014). The spouses of detained individuals stop using public services that they are entitled to use in order to avoid contact with the law (Patler and Gonzalez 2021). In her ethnography of migrants living in communities with restrictive immigration policies, Garcia (2019) demonstrates how undocumented adults and their family members develop elaborate strategies to avoid detection including changing the way they dress and taking different driving routes to work. These findings also parallel quantitative studies that show

undocumented migrants are less likely to attend public events where police may be present (Wong et al. 2019). System avoidance is the primary underlying mechanism that links the effect of immigration enforcement to educational outcomes (Amuedo-Dorantes and Lopez 2015; Bellows 2021; Dee and Murphy 2020). For example, fear of immigration raids deterred Hispanic families from enrolling children in Head Start (Santillano et al. 2020). Informed by this literature, we argue that local policing such as SQF in NYC similarly might lead to system avoidance among undocumented college students with consequences for their educational outcomes. As students observe increased police activity around college campuses, for example, they may respond by dropping classes or designing their course schedule to minimize encounters with the police.

Local Policing in "Sanctuary Cities" and NYPD's SQF Program

Like many U.S. cities with large undocumented populations, NYC never adopted programs like 287(g). Instead, NYC declared itself a "sanctuary city" and attempted to limit cooperation between city bureaucracies and federal immigration enforcement agencies. Thus, undocumented migrants living in NYC and other so-called sanctuary cities have substantially lower risk of being deported through federal immigration raids or through programs like 287(g) or Secure Communities. At the same time, NYC, along with other sanctuary cities that host large undocumented populations like Los Angeles and Philadelphia, was at the forefront of a nationwide movement that shifted law enforcement priorities away from felony offenses toward "proactive" policing, a set of policing practices that sought to aggressively target minor forms of disorderly behavior (Stuart et al. 2015; Weisburd and Majmundar 2018). A cornerstone of proactive policing was the SQF program, in which police stopped pedestrians on suspicion of low-level nonviolent crimes. Given reasonable suspicion that a person was armed and dangerous, SQF allowed the police to conduct a pat-down (frisk) of the suspect's outer garments and conduct thorough searches of individuals if pat-downs resulted in any evidence of a crime.

Undocumented migrants were not specifically targeted under SQF because NYPD officers were not deputized to stop, question, and frisk individuals who were suspected of violating immigrant laws. However, there are reasons to suspect that programs like SQF can increase the risk of deportation for immigrants and lead to system avoidance. First, changes to immigration policies dramatically increased the stakes associated with arrests, even for low-level offenses. In 1996, Congress passed the AEDPA and IIRIRA, which collectively expanded the definition of aggravated felony to include any felony or misdemeanor that carries a sentence of at least one year in prison and imposed mandatory deportation with no judicial review upon any non-citizen convicted of an aggravated felony (Fragomen and Bell 2007).

Second, although undocumented migrants were not explicitly targeted by proactive policing, SQF potentially has far-reaching effects on the population because the scale of the SQF program was enormous. In NYC, more than four million pedestrian stops were conducted between 2004 and 2012, with more than half concentrated among individuals younger than 25 years (Fagan et al. 2010). The risk of being

stopped and questioned was not randomly distributed across the population but rather concentrated on specific groups and their communities. Young male Blacks and Latinos were disproportionately affected by the SQF program (Figures and Legewie 2019; Geller 2021; Goel et al. 2016). Once stopped, male Blacks and Latinos are more likely to experience police use of force, sexual humiliation, and verbal abuse compared with their White male counterparts (Brunson and Miller 2006; Brunson and Weitzer 2009; Legewie 2016). Immigrant communities are predominately communities of color with Latino and Black immigrants composing large shares of the undocumented population (Passel and Cohn 2019a). This suggests that policing programs that disproportionately affect Black and Latino communities also disproportionately affect undocumented communities.

Variation by Race and Gender

Research consistently documents the disparate exposure to and impact of policing across ethnoracial groups. Indeed, the average yearly rate of police stops in NYC between 2004 and 2012 was almost 1,000 per 1,000 20-year-old Black men compared with about 400 for Latino and less than 250 for White and Asian 20-year-old men (Figures and Legewie 2019). Although the disparities in exposure are similarly pronounced among women, the overall rate is substantially lower with about 60 stops per 1,000 20-year-old Black women. At the same time, previous research consistently finds larger effects on Black and Latino men compared with other groups of both direct and indirect police exposure on educational outcomes (Ang 2021; Bacher-Hicks and Campa 2020; Legewie and Cricco 2022; Legewie and Fagan 2019). We argue that just as proactive policing intersects with existing racial hierarchies to generate differential effects in the general population, similar intersections may shape effects of local policing for the undocumented population.

Along these lines, some migration scholars argue that crimmigration is a "racial project" enacted by the state to maintain racial hierarchies by prioritizing the removal of working-class Latino men (Golash-Boza 2015) and creating a new underclass of Latinos who are targeted and criminalized by immigration policies (Massey and Pren 2012). The criminalization of migrants can be the result of deliberate racist behavior such as when police racially profile Latinos with the intention of triggering their deportation (Aranda and Vaquera 2015). It can also be the result of institutionalized policies that need not intentionally target migrants but nonetheless heighten their risk for arrest and deportation. For instance, Armenta (2007) studied the Nashville police department during its adoption of 287(g) and showed how local police, facing pressure to meet departmental expectations on daily arrests, aggressively stopped drivers for minor traffic violations. As a consequence, arrests for traffic violation became a major pathway through which foreign-born Latinos were funneled into deportation proceedings.

However, researchers frequently use Hispanic origin as a marker of undocumented status because nationally representative surveys and administrative data rarely collect information on legal status. Thus, studies examining the impact of crimmigration have almost exclusively focused on Latinos without distinguishing between documented and undocumented populations. In addition, few studies

have examined the effects of either federal immigration or local law enforcement policies on non-Latino groups even though the undocumented population has become increasingly diverse in terms of country of origin (Passel and Cohn 2019a).

Hence, we know much less about the impact of proactive policing or immigration enforcement on undocumented Asian and Black communities.[2] One exception is the ethnography by Golash-Boza (2017), which demonstrates how the heavy policing of Black communities intersects with structural racism in the form of residential segregation and housing and labor market discrimination to channel Jamaican and Dominican men into arrest and deportation. Although Jamaica and the Dominican Republic are not among the top 15 countries sending undocumented migrants to the United States, Dominicans and Jamaicans were, respectively, the sixth and eighth most deported groups in 2005 (Dougherty et al. 2006). These findings speak to the potential ways immigration enforcement can intersect with existing racial hierarchies to disparately affect undocumented Black men, yet we are not aware of any quantitative studies that have examined the effects of federal immigration or local law enforcement policies on Black undocumented immigrants.

Bacher-Hicks and de la Campa (2020) examined the effects of proactive policing on the academic achievement of NYC high school students and found negative effects for Black students but positive effects for White and Asian students. They speculate that because White and Asian students are less likely to have negative direct encounters with police, they could exclusively benefit from the positive spillovers of proactive policing in the form of reduced crime and perceptions of increased safety. This study did not examine effects by immigration status or disaggregate the Asian racial category. Although Asian Americans may have lower rates of police contact relative to Blacks and Latinos, the threat of police contact for undocumented Asians may be sufficient to shape behavior and affect their educational outcomes. Disaggregation of ethnic subgroups is important because some Asian subgroups have been specifically targeted for surveillance by the police.[3]

Overall, the disproportionate risk of police contact for certain groups, previous research documenting disparate effects of local policing along ethnoracial lines, and the racial nature of crimmigration all highlight the potential importance of the intersections between documentation status, race, and gender when considering the effects of local policing on undocumented students.

Data and Methods

Our analysis rests on multiple data sources covering the years 2006 to 2014.[4] First, we use administrative student data from 17 CUNY campuses.[5] The data consist of enrollment records for all CUNY undergraduate students. They include semester-level information on college ID, GPA, and credits, as well as background characteristics such as age, gender, ethnicity, College Admission Average (a standardized measure of high school course work), and documentation status. We restrict the analytic sample to 388,777 first-year students and only measure their first-semester outcomes. We believe that this restriction avoids potential bias originating from the fact that students may transfer to other campuses or drop out in

later years, which might partly be a consequence of exposure to policing around campus.

We combine CUNY data with information on pedestrian stops performed as part of the SQF program and crime complaints from the NYPD. SQF operations focus on situations in which police officers stop, question, and potentially frisk people on the street when officers reasonably suspect criminal activity (Ridgeway 2007). Police stops are documented on the SQF report worksheet (UF-250 form). Although the reporting of police stops is considered reliable during the height of the SQF program, the number of police stops might be underreported in later years (Braga et al. 2021; Eterno and Silverman 2012; Ridgeway 2007). Crime complaints include time- and geocoded information on any criminal activity reported to the NYPD either by citizens or by officers and exclude criminal activity unknown to the police.

Combining CUNY data with police records from NYC provides unique opportunities for our study. First, in contrast to most other data sources and studies, CUNY data allow us to identify undocumented students. This feature of the data makes it possible to examine the relation between the educational outcomes of undocumented students and exposure to policing around college campuses. Second, the data cover multiple cohorts of first-year college students across different CUNY campuses, which opens analytical opportunities to estimate the effect of campus police stops on educational outcomes.

Measures

Our analyses focus on three *outcome variables* that measure the educational performance of first-year college students. These variables include the number of completed course credits in the first semester, the semester GPA defined as the average performance across all completed courses in a given semester, and finally "stop-out" defined as obtaining zero credits in the following semester to measure a temporary or permanent departure from the CUNY system. The GPA measure is only based on completed courses, which is problematic considering that students might drop courses because of exposure to policing around campuses. In supplementary analysis, we partly address this problem by coding GPA as zero for students who do not complete a single class. The results are identical to the findings reported here. Together, the three measures capture both avoidance strategies such as reduced course work or stop-out and course performance in the form of GPA. Table 1 shows descriptive statistics for the three dependent variables.

The *main independent variable* focuses on proactive policing around college campuses measured as the number of SQF operations during the semester within one kilometer of the central campus location. Proactive (in contrast to reactive) policing such as SQF operations focuses on the active engagement of citizens before a crime is committed, often targeting low-level crimes and minor disorderly behavior (Zimring 2013). The proactive nature of police stops together with the high frequency of police stops targeting young men with a minority background (Figures and Legewie 2019) makes police stops potentially salient for undocumented students. To count the number of stops per semester, we define each semester as a five-month period

ranging from January to May for the spring term and from August to December for the fall term.

We adjust our measure of campus police stops in two important ways. First, we focus on the number of police stops within one kilometer per square kilometer of land area in that radius. Adjusting for land area ensures that our measure captures the density of stops around campus and not just the absolute count. This adjustment is important because some college campuses are located at the water (e.g., Kingsborough Community College at Manhattan Beach in Brooklyn). Second, we use the natural logarithm of the resulting measure. Logging reduces the skew in the distribution of campus police stops and more importantly changes the interpretation from additive to multiplicative. For example, 100 additional police stops around a campus are experienced differently if stops increase from zero to 100 or from 2,000 to 2,100.[6]

Over the observational period, the number of police stops initially increased reaching a peak in 2011 and then rapidly declined over the following years. This change was mostly due to the public outcry against the policy, the *Floyd v. City of New York* lawsuit challenging the constitutionality of the program, and a memo by the NYPD's Chief of Patrol requiring police officers to describe their reasons for stops in greater detail (Mummolo 2018). As a result, first-year college students experienced substantially different levels of campus police stops over time with a notable decline for later cohorts. Figure A1 in the online supplement shows this variation in our main independent variable across campuses and over time.

Our analysis relies on a number of additional covariates. Most importantly, we measure *documentation status* by exploiting an important feature of CUNY's tuition policies. The CUNY system offers in-state tuition to all students who received a high school diploma or GED certificate from the state of New York. This also applies to undocumented students if they submit a notarized affidavit stating that they plan to obtain legal status as soon as they are eligible (City University of New York 2022). We consider all students who submitted an affidavit as undocumented and all other students as documented. We believe that this measure is reliable because students who are eligible for in-state tuition have strong financial reasons to reveal their status. The yearly out-of-state tuition for a full-time student at a four-year college (two-year community college) in 2014 was about $16,030 ($9,000) versus $6,030 ($4,500) for in-state tuition (Office of Student Financial Assistance 2014).

In addition, our analysis includes a number of covariates that are used as control variables in the analysis. First, ethnoracial groups are based on self-reported student information and defined as a categorical variable with the values non-Latino White, non-Latino Black, non-Latino American Indian, and Latino. Reporting is voluntary with a large number of missing values. Missing values are imputed by the CUNY administration based on names and census block information. In additional analysis, we present results separately for White, Asian, Black, and Latino students who make up more than 99 percent of the student population. Second, we control for four distinct crime measures. Considering that policing is closely linked to crime, we might mistake the effect of crime on educational outcomes for the effect of campus police stops. To avoid this, we define the number of violent, property, weapon, and drug felonies around campus using the same approach as for police

Table 1: Descriptive summary statistics for key variables

	All students	Documented students	Undocumented students
Students	388,777	375,736	13,041
Course credits	7.65	7.64	8.1
GPA	2.37	2.36	2.66
Stop-out	35.57%	35.68%	32.28%
Policing and crime around campus			
Police stops	361.59	361.27	370.76
Police stops (log)	5.07	5.07	5.1
Violent felony	37.58	37.57	37.87
Violent felony (log)	3.1	3.1	3.04
Property felony	98.68	99.16	84.86
Property felony (log)	4.15	4.16	4.02
Drug felony	5.16	5.14	5.88
Drug felony (log)	1.18	1.18	1.21
Student characteristics			
Percent female	53.74%	53.71%	54.76%
Average age	20.09	20.08	20.27
College Admission Average			
First quantile	18.72%	18.89%	13.73%
Second quantile	19.25%	19.4%	14.69%
Third quantile	19.45%	19.52%	17.44%
Fourth quantile	20.01%	19.86%	24.24%
Missing	22.57%	22.32%	29.9%
Percent White	20.12%	20.51%	8.92%
Percent Asian	16.86%	16.49%	27.47%
Percent Black	28.1%	28.21%	25.09%
Percent Latino	34.58%	34.45%	38.19%

stops. Accordingly, the four measures are based on the logged count of crime incidents within one kilometer of college campuses per square kilometer land area. Finally, we adjust for age, measured as a continuous variable, and prior academic performance, based on the College Admission Average (CAA) computed by the CUNY administration from prior test scores and high school course work as part of the admissions process. CAA is coded as a categorical variable with four quantiles and a separate category for missing data.

Table 1 shows the summary statistics for our sample of students.

Empirical Strategy

Our analysis tests the hypothesis that widespread police stops around college campuses have unintended spillover effects on undocumented students. Estimating the effect of campus police stops is challenging considering that undocumented students might select certain CUNY colleges partly based on expectations about law enforcement activities in and around campus or based on characteristics related to policing. In addition, policing is closely linked to crime and other attributes

that affect impact educational outcomes for undocumented college students. To address these challenges, we use college and cohort fixed effects and adjust for college-specific linear trends. This approach focuses on cohort-to-cohort variation in campus police stops or more precisely deviations in policing around campus from a college-specific linear trend. Focusing on variation in campus police stops at the same campus mitigates the selection problem by controlling for unobserved college characteristics that are related to the selection of students into college (Hanushek and Rivkin 2009; Hoxby 2000). It estimates how changes in the experiences of students at the same school are associated with changes in the educational outcomes across different cohorts of students net of any observed and unobserved time-stable college characteristics. Focusing the analysis on first-semester students further avoids problems related to students transferring to other campuses or dropping out of college in response to their experience during the first semester. In addition, we control for a comprehensive set of crime measures with different specifications to ensure that any observed policing effects are not driven by crime.

We start by estimating our model for undocumented men and later show the results for other groups as well. More formally, we estimate the following linear regression model for our three dependent variables discussed above:

$$y_{ict} = \beta_0 + \beta_1 ln(stops)_{ct} + \beta_2 X_i + \beta_3 X_{ct} + \theta_c + \theta_t + \alpha_c X_t + \varepsilon_{ict},$$

where y_{ict} is the outcome variable for student i at campus c in semester t. The main independent variable $ln(stops)_{ct}$ is on the college-cohort level and measures campus police stops. The corresponding coefficient β_1 is the key parameter of interest and estimates the relation between campus police stops and our outcome variables. θ_c and θ_t represent fixed effect terms for college and cohorts that capture all observed and unobserved, time-constant differences across colleges and cohorts. Control variables include both measures on the student level X_i (students' CAA, age, and ethnicity) and crime measures on the college-cohort level X_{ct} (violent, property felony, weapons, and drug felonies). Finally, the models include a continues time trend for each campus ($\alpha_c X_t$) to capture local trends in campus policing and students' performance over time at each campus. Standard errors are clustered at the campus and semester level.

Results

We begin our analysis by examining the effect of campus police stops on the academic outcomes of undocumented men at CUNY. Table 2 presents the results from three separate regression models that focus on course credits, GPA, and stop-out during the first semester. The findings show a statistically significant, negative relation between campus police stops and course credits, but not GPA and stop-out. For every one percent increase in campus police stops, the number of credits decreases by about 0.01. To put the size of this effect into perspective, consider the change in campus police stops from the fall semester of 2011 to the fall semester of 2014, a period during which the use of SQF rapidly declined. On average, campus police stops declined from 628.0 to 30.5 or by 95.1 percent. This decline corresponds

Table 2: Effect of police stops on course credits, GPA, and stop-out for undocumented men

	Credits	GPA	Stop-out
Campus police stops	−0.787[†]	−0.086	−0.004
	(0.255)	(0.060)	(0.024)
Campus crime			
Violent felonies	0.313	0.049	−0.009
	(0.241)	(0.054)	(0.022)
Property felonies	0.997[†]	0.152	−0.102[†]
	(0.378)	(0.092)	(0.039)
Weapons felonies	0.220	0.114[*]	0.004
	(0.203)	(0.046)	(0.019)
Drug felonies	0.091	0.053	−0.006
	(0.200)	(0.046)	(0.019
Student characteristics			
Age	−0.071[†]	0.058[†]	−0.001
	(0.019)	(0.004)	(0.002)
College Admission Average			
Second quantile	1.777[†]	0.316[†]	−0.052[†]
	(0.173)	(0.052)	(0.018)
Third quantile	3.146[†]	0.604[†]	−0.126[†]
	(0.252)	(0.057)	(0.021)
Fourth quantile	4.380[†]	0.925[†]	−0.173[†]
	(0.258)	(0.059)	(0.021)
Missing	1.204[†]	0.378[†]	−0.013
	(0.168)	(0.053)	(0.019)
Race/ethnicity			
Black	−0.345	−0.209[†]	0.037
	(0.223)	(0.061)	(0.024)
Latino	−0.590[†]	−0.187[†]	0.029
	(0.210)	(0.055)	(0.022)
Asian	−0.275	−0.080	−0.018
	(0.206)	(0.055)	(0.020)
American Indian	−1.130	−0.380	0.131
	(0.969)	(0.292)	(0.087)
Campus fixed effects	✓	✓	✓
Cohort fixed effects	✓	✓	✓
Campus linear trend	✓	✓	✓
Observations	5,898	5,303	5,898

Note: $* p < 0.05$; † $p < 0.01$.

to an increase of 2.4 in course credits for undocumented men at CUNY or about 0.8 classes, indicating that the move away from SQF over that period substantially increased the educational participation of undocumented men in college. Alternatively, we can focus on variation in campus police stops across colleges even though our model focuses on within-college variation. For example, consider moving an undocumented man in the 2011 fall semester from a campus with a relatively low

(20th percentile) to a campus-semester with a relatively high (80th percentile) number of police stops. This move increases campus police stops by a factor of 6.94 from 159 to 1,104 and corresponds to 1.5 less credits, or about 0.5 classes at three credits per class. Although these changes in campus police stops might seem large, they reflect observed differences in the experiences of students across cohorts or college campuses in NYC with a profound impact on the course-taking of undocumented students. Both scenarios are indicative of a substantial negative causal effect of campus police stops on the course-taking of undocumented men.

However, we do not find any effect on GPA or stop-out, defined as the likelihood that a student enrolled in one semester completes zero credits in the next semester. The point estimates are small and statistically insignificant. Overall, these findings indicate that undocumented men reduce their course work and partially withdraw in response to a high volume of campus police stops consistent with arguments based on system avoidance. However, undocumented men seem to continue to recognize the value of education particularly in the longer term considering the lack of any effect on stop-out, and they continue to invest in the courses they take as reflected in the null effect on GPA.

Estimating the effect of campus police stops is challenging considering that policing is closely linked to crime and other neighborhood or campus characteristics. To address these concerns, we conduct a series of analyses to examine the plausibility of the results and sensitivity to different model specifications. First, we conduct a placebo analysis using the pretreatment variables high school test scores (CAA), age, and student ethnoracial group as outcome variables (Athey and Imbens 2017). High school test scores, age, and student race/ethnicity should be unaffected by college campus police stops, so the true effect is zero. If, however, our estimates for the placebo analyses are nonzero, our identification strategy would be implausible. The results are presented in Table A1 in the online supplement together with the previous results for credits as a comparison. Credits, high school test scores, and age are standardized to ease comparisons between models. The findings show the same substantial and statistically significant effect on first-semester college credits. However, the coefficient estimates for the placebo tests are substantially smaller and far from statistically significant. They show no discernible effect of campus police stops on all of the important pretreatment outcomes. This finding increases the plausibility of our estimation strategy.

Second, we assess the sensitivity of the results to several alternative specifications of the crime controls. In the main analysis presented above, we estimate the effect of campus police stops with controls for crime measured over the same period as campus police stops. Table A2 in the online supplement presents the results from several different specifications using credits as the outcome variable. Model 1 replicates the main results for comparison. Model 2 to 4 assess the sensitivity of the results to different definitions of the crime controls. This includes controlling for lagged crime measures considering that prior crime is an important determinant of current policing (model 2), adjusting for two crime lags instead of one (model 3), and removing weapons and drug felonies from the model because they partly overlap with other crime measures in the model (model 4). The findings indicate that the results are consistent across different specifications of the crime controls.

Table 3: Effect of campus police stops on course credits by documentation status and gender

	All students	Undoc. men	Undoc. women	Doc. men	Doc. women
Campus police stops	$-0.786^{\dagger}$	$-0.787^{\dagger}$	-0.187	$-0.277^{\dagger}$	-0.175^{*}
	(0.254)	(0.255)	(0.223)	(0.090)	(0.084)
Campus police stops $\times$ undocumented women	0.614^{*}				
	(0.269)				
Campus police stops $\times$ documented men	0.501^{*}				
	(0.231)				
Campus police stops $\times$ documented women	0.600^{*}				
	(0.243)				
Observations	388,765	5,898	7,141	173,934	201,792

Note: $* \; p < 0.05$; $\dagger \; p < 0.01$.

The relation between campus police stops and course credits remains large and statistically significant with only small differences in the point estimates.

In the next step of the analysis, we examine the heterogeneity of the effect on course credits first across documentation status and gender and then by race/ethnicity. Table 3 presents the results for course credits by documentation status and gender both from a fully interactive model with undocumented men as the reference category and from separate models for each group (Table A3 in the online supplement shows the interactive model for all three outcomes.) The findings reveal large variations in the effect across groups. Most importantly, the effect of campus police stops is larger for undocumented men than both undocumented women and documented men or women. This finding supports the argument that undocumented men are particularly affected by municipal policing considering that any encounter with the police even for disorderly behavior or minor offenses can be consequential. Although the difference in the effect across the other three groups is not statistically significant (not shown in Table 3), the findings from the separate models indicate that documented men similarly experience a negative effect that is statistically significant different from zero but only about one-third in size compared with undocumented men.

The findings also show no or very small effects on women regardless of documentation status. In particular, the point estimates are about one-forth (undocumented women) or one-fifth (documented women) the size of the effect for undocumented men. Although the estimate is statistically significant for documented women considering the substantially larger sample size (201,792 compared with 7,141 for documented versus undocumented women), the size of this effect is small. This finding potentially reflects the substantially lower risk of being stopped by the police for women compared with men (Figures and Legewie 2019).

Next, Table 4 shows the effect of campus police stops on course credits by documentation status and race/ethnicity for men focusing on separate models for each subgroup. Table A4 in the online supplement presents the equivalent results from a fully interactive model for men and women using undocumented Black students as the reference category. As reported before, undocumented men experience sub-

Table 4: Effect of campus police stops on course credits by documentation status and race for men

	Black	Asian	White	Latino
A. Undocumented students				
Campus police stops	$-1.380^{†}$	-0.973^{*}	-0.339	-0.681
	(0.433)	(0.428)	(0.624)	(0.367)
Observations	1,171	1,818	518	2,369
B. Documented students				
Campus police stops	$-0.402^{†}$	$-0.390^{†}$	-0.168	-0.208
	(0.103)	(0.125)	(0.108)	(0.119)
Observations	45,639	31,822	38,438	57,467

Note: $* \; p < 0.05$; † $p < 0.01$.

stantially larger negative effects of campus police stops on course credits compared with documented men across the different ethnoracial groups. Although the results in Table A4 in the online supplement indicate that the difference in the effect size for White, Latino, and Asian undocumented students compared with Black undocumented students is not statistically significant, the point estimates suggest a substantially larger effect for Black and to a smaller extent Asian undocumented students. These results should be interpreted cautiously considering the small sample sizes across the different subgroups of undocumented students. Nonetheless, the pattern suggests that Black students who are most frequently stopped by the police also experience the largest negative effect. For documented students, we similarly find that Black followed by Asian students experience the largest negative effect of campus police stops on college credits.

The results for both documented and undocumented Asian students might be surprising considering that stop rates are substantially lower compared with both Black and Latino students. However, many Asian subgroups were specifically targeted for surveillance by the NYPD following the September 11, 2001, attacks on the World Trade Center. Table A5 in the online supplement explores this pattern by showing the effect of campus police stops among Asian men across the seven largest countries of origin (including "Missing"). The point estimates provide tentative evidence that students from Pakistan followed by Bangladesh experience larger negative effects of campus police stops, but the analysis is limited by the small sample size for each subgroup. Indeed, the difference in effect size across groups is generally not statistically significant.

Conclusions

Recent estimates suggest that about 10.5 million undocumented immigrants reside in the United States (Lopez et al. 2021). The forcible removal of these foreign-born individuals reached historical levels over the last three decades. Researchers have responded by examining the consequences of mass deportation for undocumented

migrants and the broader immigrant community. Yet this research is often limited by the lack of reliable data on the documentation status of immigrants and a focus on federal law enforcement programs. Local policing practices may have similar far-reaching effects on undocumented immigrants and their families but have received comparatively less focus and attention.

This study contributes to the literature by examining the impact of local policing in the form of NYPD's SQF program on the educational outcomes of undocumented college students at CUNY, the largest urban public university system in the United States. Importantly, we leverage a unique administrative data set that includes information on documentation status. Using data on first-year students, we find a substantial negative effect of campus police stops on course credits for undocumented men, with no impact on GPA or stop-out. This effect is more pronounced among Black and to a smaller extent Asian undocumented men, with tentative evidence that Pakistani and Bangladeshi students experience the largest negative effect among Asian men. In contrast, both undocumented women and documented men and women experience small or no effects of campus police stops. We interpret these findings as possible avoidance strategies among undocumented students. However, we acknowledge that our study is unable to directly explore system avoidance as the underlying mechanism. Indeed, stress and other mental health issues are a plausible alternative mechanism. Undocumented students might also invest more time in paid work instead of college if they anticipate any economic costs, or policing might shift their priorities in other ways. Although previous research highlights the importance of avoidance strategies for undocumented students and our findings for course credits support this idea, future research should explore the processes by which local policing affects educational outcomes in college and beyond for undocumented students.

Undocumented young adults who attend college are one of the most highly selected and advantaged groups among undocumented immigrants. In addition, educational institutions tend to be more welcoming and protective environments than workplaces (Gleeson and Gonzales 2012). Yet, our findings indicate that the fear of police encounters and the threat of deportation that accompanies each possible encounter can lead to system avoidance even for highly selected groups in comparatively protective institutions. Thus, we might expect that the chilling effect of local policing is even more severe in other settings and for less selected immigrants who are not attending college. Understanding these effects is important considering the implications for social inequality and the social-economic integration of large immigrant communities.

In recent decades, many cities with large immigrant populations have taken visible stands against the rise of mass deportation by declaring themselves sanctuary cities and adopting policies to shield their residents from federal immigration authorities. Cities like New York, Los Angeles, and Chicago host large shares of undocumented immigrants and resisted cooperating with federal immigration enforcement programs such as 287(g) and Secure Communities, the hallmark programs that enabled interior enforcement. Our findings demonstrate that limiting cooperation between local law enforcement and federal immigration authorities is not enough to protect immigrant communities from the chilling effects of crimmi-

gration. Changes to federal immigration policies in 1996 increased the population of immigrants who are vulnerable to deportation and raised the stakes for everyday encounters with local law enforcement. Within this context, our findings show that local policing practices that increase undocumented immigrants' exposure to law enforcement had negative impacts on educational outcomes for even the most advantaged undocumented immigrants (i.e., undocumented college students). NYPD's SQF program had enormous reach with more than four million pedestrian stops conducted between 2004 and 2012. Thus, our study offers evidence that everyday policing practices negatively affect immigrant communities, even in the context of cities that are considered pro-immigrant. We call on immigration researchers to consider these potentially far-reaching consequences of local law enforcement practices in facilitating the criminal justice–to–deportation pipeline.

Finally, our findings show that immigration status intersects with ethnoracial inequalities and disproportionately concentrates the negative effects of local policing on Black and South Asian undocumented young men. Over the last three decades, the undocumented population has become increasingly diverse in terms of national origin with large shares coming from China, India, and the Caribbean (Passel and Cohn 2019a). Lack of reliable data on immigration status does not allow immigration researchers to study the impact of either federal or local immigration enforcement on new groups of non-Latino immigrants. Using data on an ethnically and racially diverse population of undocumented CUNY students, our study addresses this gap in the literature.

Notes

1 Along with at least 18 other states, New York State allows resident undocumented youth to pay in-state tuition. In 2019, New York joined seven other states in making state financial aid for college available to resident undocumented youth (National Conference of State Legislatures 2021).

2 In NYC, Asian Americans compose 14 percent of the population, nearly 17 percent of CUNY students, and 27 percent of of undocumented CUNY students (U.S. Census Bureau 2022).

3 For example, following the September 11, 2001, attacks on the World Trade Center, the NYPD established its own counterterrorism bureau and joined federal agencies to surveil and profile the South Asian community in NYC. These surveillant activities included clandestine spying programs that monitored mosques, Muslim businesses, and Muslim student associations, including many on CUNY campuses (Apuzzo and Goldman 2011; Hawley and Apuzzo 2011).

4 We restrict the analysis to the years 2006 to 2014 because information on the geographic location of police stops is unreliable in previous years and because our CUNY data end in 2014.

5 The campuses include the City College of New York, Baruch College, Hunter College, Lehman College, Brooklyn College, Queens College, College Of Staten Island, Bronx Community College, Queensborough Community College, Kingsborough Community College, Borough of Manhattan Community College, New York City College of Technology, Hostos Community College, York College, John Jay College of Criminal Justice, LaGuardia Community College, and Medgar Evers College.

6 With a linear measure of campus police stops, the main results show the same direction but are not statistically significant. This finding confirms the intuition that a linear measure of police stops does not adequately reflect the lived experience of students.

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