

Signed U Visa Certifications in Washington State Counties

Identifying Patterns Using Latinx Population
Summer 2020



Tania Santiago Pastrana

Advisor: Dr. Jin-Kyu Jung
Second Reader: Dr. Keith Nitta

Completed in fulfillment of the Master of Arts in Policy Studies, University of Washington Bothell

Abstract

Congress created the U visa in 2000 as a form of immigration relief to help government agencies investigate crimes committed against undocumented immigrants and keep the overall community safe. U visa applicants are required to submit a certification signed by the government agency investigating the crime to qualify. While the U visa is a federal program, state and local government agencies process U visa certifications (Form I-918B). Without the signed certification, undocumented immigrants are not eligible to receive a U visa.

In 2018, Washington state passed House Bill 1022, Enhancing Crime Victim Participation in the Criminal Justice System Process (HB-1022) to create consistency on how U visa certifications are processed in Washington state. This capstone explores county patterns between signed U visa certifications in Washington State between July 1, 2018 through June 30, 2019 and Latinx county population. The data analysis suggests that the higher Latinx population in a county, the less signed U visa certifications. In addition, the data shows that 35.9% of Washington State counties signed zero U visa certifications between July 2018 and June 2019. That is over a third of all Washington state counties. This capstone is considered a cross sectional quantitative research design. Further research is advised on this important matter.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

Undocumented immigrants who are victims of crimes in the United States face many systemic barriers to access resources and protections. Due to fear of deportation, undocumented immigrants may hesitate to report and participate in the investigations of crimes committed against them or their families. As a result, in 2000 Congress created the U visa as a form of immigration relief to help government agencies investigate crimes committed against undocumented immigrants and keep the overall community safe. U visa applicants are required to submit a certification signed by the government agency investigating the crime in order to qualify. While the U visa is a federal program, state and local government agencies process U visa certifications (Form I-918B). Without the signed certification, undocumented immigrants are not eligible to receive a U visa. Congress only provides broad guidelines to government agencies on U visa certifications causing inconsistency on how they are processed across the nation.

In 2018, Washington state passed House Bill 1022, Enhancing Crime Victim Participation in the Criminal Justice System Process (HB-1022) to create consistency on how U visa certifications are processed in Washington state. My hypothesis is that there is a disparity on how many U visa certifications are processed where counties with high Latinx populations (26% and up) are producing less than 25% of all U visa certifications in Washington State.

Before going in depth on what the U visa certification is, it is important to know what the U visa is and why Congress created it. Congress intended the U visa to be used as a tool to better serve law enforcement and communities. The U visa was created when Congress passed the Victims of Trafficking and Violence Protection Act of 2000 (VTVPA). First, VTVPA acknowledges that immigrants, especially women and children often get targeted and become

victims of crimes. Congress wanted to ensure that when crimes occur, immigrants “must be able to report these crimes to law enforcement and fully participate in the investigation of the crimes committed against them and the prosecution of the perpetrators of such crimes” (8 USC §1101(a)(15)(U)(i)). This language indicates that Congress was concerned about undocumented people being able to report and participate in the investigation of crimes. Second, Congress states that the U visa created “a new nonimmigrant visa classification that will strengthen the ability of law enforcement agencies to detect, investigate, and prosecute cases, while offering protection to victims of such offenses in keeping with the humanitarian interests of the United States” (8 USC §1101(a)(15)(U)(i)). Congress created the U visa with the intention of it becoming a tool for law enforcement to better serve immigrants who have become victims of crimes and bring criminals to justice. Finally, VTVPA states that undocumented immigrants who are approved for the U visa will be eligible to apply for permanent residency “when doing so is justified on humanitarian grounds, for family unity, or is otherwise in the public interest” (8 USC §1101(a)(15)(U)(i)). The passage confirms when an undocumented immigrant gets approved for a U visa, in the long term, they may be eligible to get permanent residency if it is in the interest of the United States and it is based on humanitarian grounds.

VTVPA requires that U visa applicants participate in the investigation of the crime. To meet this eligibility requirement, undocumented immigrants must submit Form I-918 Supplement B (I-918B), U Nonimmigrant Status Certification also known as the U visa certification form (Form I-918 Supplement B, U Nonimmigrant Status Certification, 2019). VTVPA requires that Form I-918B be signed by a law enforcement agency, prosecutor, judge, or other federal, state, or local authority investigating criminal activities” (8 USC §1101(a)(15)(U)(i)). As can be seen, this list includes all government agencies or entities that

have the authority to investigate crimes. If a U visa applicant does not submit a signed Form I-918B with their application, their U visa application will be denied.

Applicants can only qualify for a U visa if they were victims of a qualifying crime. Congress created a list of 31 U visa qualifying crimes. Congress states that these categories are only general and can be used in a broad sense (8 USC §1101(a)(15)(U)(i)). The list includes abduction, abusive sexual contact, attempt to commit any of the named crimes, being held hostage, blackmail, conspiracy to commit any of the named crimes, domestic violence, extortion, false imprisonment, felonious assault, female genital mutilation, fraud in foreign labor contracting, incest, involuntary servitude, kidnapping, manslaughter, murder, obstruction of justice, peonage, perjury, prostitution, rape, sexual assault, sexual exploitation, slave trade, solicitation to commit any of the named crimes, stalking, torture, trafficking, unlawful criminal restraint, and witness tampering (Form I-918 Supplement B, U Nonimmigrant Status Certification, 2019). If the crime committed against an undocumented immigrant does not fit one of these general categories, then they are not eligible for the U visa.

The U visa can also be utilized to protect immigrants who have experienced crimes that occur in the workplace. It is predicted that around 16.4% of US workers are noncitizen of which 5.4% are undocumented immigrants (Cho, 2012). This percentage is hard to calculate because undocumented immigrants work without authorization. In the workplace, undocumented people have little protections and can be taken advantage of by their employer (Hanson, 2010). Undocumented female farmworkers are especially vulnerable to sexual harassment in the workplace. Due to their immigration status, many times women are forced to work for little pay. Predators are aware of not only their immigration status but also their poverty (Garcia, 2012). Undocumented immigrants who experience crimes committed against them at work can report

the crime to multiple government agencies including local law enforcement and the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission.

When undocumented immigrants are afraid to engage with police officers, crimes go unreported and law enforcement is unable to investigate crimes. It's important to remember that the U visa was created to benefit law enforcement (Constable, 2012). Nationwide, there is fear of cooperating with law enforcement as an undocumented immigrant and this can be seen by the rate of U visa submission trends under the Trump administration. Since 2007, the U visa has an upward trend of how many people apply yearly but in 2019 there was a decline in application submissions (Kanno-Youngs, 2019). This indicates that undocumented immigrants are fearful of not only applying for the U visa but for also engaging with law enforcement to report or investigate crimes. The Tucson Police Chief, Chris Magnus, said that the U visa has been an essential tool for investigating crimes in their community but recently victims and witnesses are reluctant to cooperate with police (Kanno-Youngs, 2019).

Fear of working with law enforcement is a pattern happening all over the United States. In New York, the Suffolk County police commissioner said:

“The last thing I want is a fearful community... whether it's fear of criminals or fear of law enforcement. We solve crimes based on people coming to us. It's that simple. If people think they're going to get deported every time they speak to a police officer, it's not helpful.”

- Mayo Hanlon, 2017

Under the Trump Administration, immigrants have had a challenging time getting U visa certifications signed. For example, Jose Robles became a victim of a crime in Washington state but the Lakewood Police Department (PD) refused to sign his certification (Pacheco-Flores, 2018). Since Lakewood PD won't sign his U visa certification, Mr. Robles will not be able to

apply for a U visa. As a result, Mr. Robles for many weeks sought sanctuary at the Gethsemane Lutheran Church in downtown Seattle so that he wouldn't be deported (Pacheco-Flores, 2018). This case occurred in Washington state which tends to be more immigrant friendly.

While undocumented immigrants are currently fearful of working with law enforcement to investigate crimes under the Trump Administration, the fact is that problems with the U visa process has been challenging for applicants since its creation as will be illustrated in the literature review below.

While U visa certification concerns are nationwide, this capstone focuses on Washington state counties. Two major finds will be discussed in-depth in Chapter 4. First my research found that 35.9% of Washington State counties signed zero U visa certifications between July 2018 and June 2019. That is over a third of all Washington state counties. In addition, my data analysis indicates that the higher Latinx population in a county, the less signed U visa certifications. See Chapter 4 for further details. Further studies on this data is advised.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

The purpose of this section is to go in depth on 1) the U visa legislative history 2) eligibility criteria and 3) discussing the inconsistency in the U visa certification process.

Section 2.1: Legislative History

The U visa was established with the passage of H.R.3244 – Victims of Trafficking and Violence Protection Act (VTVPA) of 2000. Representative Christopher Smith first introduced VTVPA in the House of Representatives on November 8, 1999 (Victims of Trafficking and Violence Protection Act of 2000). At the time, Bill Clinton was the President of the United States. The bill went through the legislative process for about 10 months before it was signed into law by President Clinton on October 28, 2000 (Victims of Trafficking and Violence Protection Act of 2000). This was a historic day for immigrant rights.

It's important to note that the U visa status is part of the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) of 2000 (Jensen, 2009). VAWA 2000 was originally part of VTVPA as it was referenced in section two, division B. The original bill of VAWA was passed in 1994 but with the passage of the 2000 version, it increased the legal protections that had been overlooked in the original bill (Hanson, 2010). For the first time, undocumented victims of crimes had a form of immigration relief in the United States with the passage of the U visa.

The passage of VTVPA had a wide range of support from both Democrats and Republicans in the House of Representatives. VTVPA had a total of eight original sponsors including: Rep. Sam Gejdenson (D-CT-2), Rep. Marcy Kaptur (D-OH-9), Rep. Louise McIntosh Slaughter (D-NY-28), Rep. Tom Lantos (D-CA-12), Rep. Cynthia McKinney (D-GA-4), Rep.

Peter King (R-NY-3), Rep. Frank Wolf (R-VA-10), and John Coksey (R-LA-5)

(Victims of Trafficking and Violence Protection Act of 2000). Of the eight original sponsors, five of them identified as members of the Democratic party and three were Republican. Between November 15, 1999 and May 8, 2000, additional representatives also became co-sponsors of VTVPA including Rep. Paul Gillmor (R-OH-5), Rep. Eni Faleomavaega (D-AS), and Rep. Bernard Sanders (I-VT) among others

(Victims of Trafficking and Violence Protection Act of 2000). In the House of Representatives there were a total of 19 Republicans, 17 Democrats, and 1 independent that became co-sponsors of VTVPA. The co-sponsors represented a total of 18 states including: California, Florida, New York, North Carolina, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Connecticut, Illinois, Massachusetts, Texas, Virginia, Colorado, Georgia, Hawaii, Indiana, Louisiana, South Carolina, and Vermont. As can be seen, there was a wide range of support not only across states but also across party lines.

Congress placed a yearly cap on how many undocumented immigrants can be granted a U visa. Since the passage of VTVPA in 2000, Congress has set a cap to grant 10,000 U visa applications every fiscal year (8 USC §1101(a)(15)(U)(i)). Since the U visa is only given to a limited amount of people every year, Congress put language in VTVPA to provide more opportunities for immigrants to seek immigration relief. VTVPA states that “nothing limits the ability of aliens who qualify for status under section 101(a)(15)(U) to seek any other immigration benefits or status for which the alien may be eligible” (8 USC §1101(a)(15)(U)(i)). This means that if an undocumented immigrant was eligible to apply for forms of immigration relief, they are able to apply in addition to applying for the U visa. It must be noted that in immigration law, also known as code INA, undocumented immigrants are referred to as “aliens.” While this is

offensive language, this paper is citing federal code therefore the word “alien” will be used to refer to undocumented immigrants at times with the intention to capture the historic context.

Although the U visa was created in 2000, the regulations were not finalized until 2007. Applications that were submitted between 2000 and 2007 were referred to as “U interim relief” (Jensen, 2009). This means that they were deemed as *prima facie* eligible until the regulations were implemented. In 2005, Congress reauthorized VAWA in which they mandated that in no more than 180 days, the Attorney General, Secretary of Homeland Security, and the Secretary of State would promulgate regulations for the U visa (Hanson, 2010). However, the final rules weren’t put into effect by the United States Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) until September 2007 (Utah Bar Journal, 2016).

There are several reasons why the U visa regulations took years to be published. First, it took the government time to negotiate and consult with battered women organizations and immigrant rights organizations on the final rules (Jensen, 2009). Second, the U visa was created before the creation of the Department of Homeland Security (DHS). Before DHS there was an agency called Immigration and Naturalization Services (INS) (Stoltz, 2004). After the creation of DHS, the U visa regulations had to be re-circulated and approved by personal from the new Department of Homeland Security (Hanson, 2010). Congress took notice of the delay and through the years put pressure so that the regulations could be implemented. For example, Congressman Frank Pallone Jr. released a statement in January 2003 stating, “INS must expedite U visa regulations mandated by the Congress two years ago” (Stoltz, 2004). During this time, U visa applicants could do nothing but wait for the regulations to be implemented.

The U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) has information available online with data on the U visa approvals and denials between 2009-2019. The numbers indicate that

there is a large backlog on U visa applications since they only approve 10,000 U visas every year. In 2009, USCIS states the following data: they had received 6,850 applications; approved 6,045 U visas; denied 661 cases; and had 11,740 cases still pending (Number of Form I-918, 2009). This information shows that shortly after the regulations were published, there was already a large backlog on pending U visa cases. In 2018, USCIS states the following data: 34,967 had been received; 10,009 had been approved; 2,317 cases had been denied; and 134,714 cases were pending (Number of Form I-918, 2009). These astonishing numbers truly highlight that as the years went by, the number of cases pending keeps growing. To put it into context, in 2012 it was taking USCIS about six to nine months to process U visa cases (Immigrant Rights Clinic of Stanford Law School, 2012). It is currently taking about 57 months to get on the U visa waitlist and many more years before a U visa is officially given to an applicant (Processing Time for Petition for U Nonimmigrant Status, 2019). While applicants and their derivatives are on the U visa waitlist, also known as deferred action, USCIS issues them work permits so that they can legally work while they wait for the U visa to officially be granted to them (Petition for U Nonimmigrant Status, 2019 (Petition for U Nonimmigrant Status, 2019). This is incredibly important because of how long it's taking USCIS to process U visa cases.

Section 2.2: U Visa Eligibility Criteria

Congress required four main eligibility requirements. If an undocumented immigrant does not meet all four requirements, the applicant will not be approved for a U visa. The four requirements include:

1. The alien has suffered substantial physical or mental abuse as a result of having been a victim of criminal activity described in the clause;

2. The alien (or in the case of an alien child under the age of 16, the parent, guardian, or next friend of the alien) possesses information concerning criminal activity described in clause;
3. The alien (or in the case of an alien child under the age of 16 the parent, guardian, or next friend of the alien) has been helpful, is being helpful, or is likely to be helpful to a Federal, State, or local law enforcement official, to a Federal, State, or local prosecuting criminal activity described in clause;
4. The criminal activity described in clause (iii) violated the laws of the United States or occurred in the United States (including in Indian country and military installations) or the territories and possessions of the United States (8 USC §1101(a)(15)(U)(i)).

The immigration code also includes regulations on which family members can be included in the U visa. When an undocumented immigrant applies for a U visa, depending on their age they may be eligible to include family members on their U visa application. Family members included in a U visa application are called “derivatives.” If a person is under the age of 21 years old, they are able to include their spouse, children, unmarried siblings under age 18, and parents as derivatives (8 USC §1101(a)(15)(U)(i)). The moment an applicant turns 21 years old, the law limits which family members can be considered derivatives. Applicants of the U visa who are over 21 years old can include their spouse and children who are less than 21 years old (8 USC §1101(a)(15)(U)(i)). The most important age to consider when applying for a U visa is age 21 as it will determine who can be included as a derivative on a U visa application.

Section 2.3: Inconsistency in U Visa Certification Process

U visa applicants will be denied relief if they do not submit a signed Form I-918B, also known as the U visa certification form, signed by a certifying agency. However, how these certifications are processed is problematic starting with the form instructions. For many years, the instructions of Form I-918B has stated that law enforcement agencies have the discretion to sign U visa certifications. Some immigrant rights advocates argue that by adding this language to the U visa certification instructions, it undermines the statute of the U visa (Jensen, 2009). They argue that Congress didn't include language in VTVPA that gave law enforcement discretion to sign the certification. By adding the word "discretionary" to the U visa certification instructions, it gives law enforcement agencies the ability to deny certifications and undermines the entire purpose of why the U visa was created in the first place. Some advocates believe that the word "discretion" should be removed from the instructions altogether (Jensen, 2009). Instead, clear language that matches the intent of VTVPA should be added to the Form I-918B instructions.

USCIS provides some training materials for law enforcement agencies on the U visa certification. Over time, the training materials have changed. In February 2007, USCIS released a one-page overview of the U visa specifically for law enforcement. While the document explains what the U visa is and who qualifies, the majority of the document discusses the U visa certification process including who can sign the certification form (U.S. Department of Homeland Security, 2017). The document also gave information regarding logistics on best practices. For example, it states that Form I-918B should be filled out completely by the certifying agency, they must sign in a blue pen, and submit the document with the original signature (U.S. Department of Homeland Security, 2017). There is a small section on the document with the title, "Is any law enforcement authority required to complete a certification?"

USCIS wrote, “The decision whether to complete Supplement B is at the discretion of the certifying agency. However, keep in mind that a victims’ U visa petition will be denied without this certification” (U.S. Department of Homeland Security, 2017). It is important to note that when Congress passed VTVPA, there was no language in the bill giving certifying agencies discretion on signing the certification form.

The change in tone on the U visa certification training documents created by USCIS has evolved over time. The 2007 version was created when the original regulations were published. By 2009, Barack H. Obama was President and the FBI published guidelines that were immigrant friendly and accurately portrayed the spirit of VTVPA. However, the change in tone of the resource guide drastically changed in 2019 with the Trump Administration. Under the Trump administration, USCIS created a resource guide with language that was conflicting and made it easier for law enforcement agencies to deny signing U visa certifications.

In 2019, USCIS issued a new resource guide for law enforcement agencies. The differences between the 2007 overview document and the 2019 resource guide are overwhelming. The first major difference is that the 2019 version had over 17 pages and was addressed to federal, state, local, tribal and territorial law enforcement, prosecutors, judges, and other government agencies (U Visa Law Enforcement Resource Guide, 2019). In 2007 USCIS wrote, “While Form I-918 does not confer any immigration benefits or status, it is an essential confirmation that the qualifying crime occurred and that the victim was helpful, is being helpful, or is likely to be helpful in the detection, investigation, or prosecution of the qualifying criminal activity” (U Visa Law Enforcement Resource Guide, 2019). This language does align with the intent of VTVPA passage. The 2019 version has new language that is conflicting with the spirit of VTVPA. USCIS added a section that states:

USCIS will consider any information you provide in its analysis of eligibility and admissibility. A criminal history does not automatically render a victim ineligible. Also, your agency is not responsible for determining whether an individual is eligible for an immigration benefit. Certifying agencies with legal authority many choose to run background checks on individuals prior to signing a certification. Provide USCIS with information in the designated section on the form (U Visa Law Enforcement Resource Guide, 2019).

This language is conflicting to what the wording of VTVPA states because it says that a certifying agency can choose to run a background check before signing the certification. This gives agencies an opportunity to deny signing a certification, especially for someone with a criminal history. First, there is no language in VTVPA that states which types of criminal backgrounds should matter or not. Second, even people with a criminal history can become victims of a crime in the future regardless of their past. None of this conflicting language is included in prior training documents created by USCIS.

Another contradiction that the 2019 U visa Law Enforcement Resource Guide has is regarding statute of limitation on criminal investigations. VTVPA does not put boundaries on how old or new a crime must be before a victim can apply for a U visa. The 2019 resource guide directly contradicts itself in the same document. First it states, “U visa regulations do not set a specific statute of limitations for signing the Form I-918B, or require that a case must have progressed to a certain stage (e.g., prosecution or conviction)” (DHS U Visa Law Enforcement Resource Guide, 2019). This language is in accordance to VTVPA which is that it doesn’t matter when the crime happened. A victim can request a U visa certification at any time. However, later in the resource guide USCIS states that certifying agencies should create their own internal policy and consider “whether the agency will establish specific parameters related to certifying cases where a significant amount of time has passed since commission of the crimes (U visa regulations do not set a specific statute of limitations for signing the Form I-918B)” (DHS U

Visa Law Enforcement Resource Guide, 2019). USCIS is promoting that agencies create their own rules on when to refuse to sign certifications even though VTVPA is clear that it does not matter when a crime happened.

The 2019 government U visa resource guide is drastically different than other resources created since 2007, including the FBI 2009 training document. For example, in 2009 the FBI created a Law Enforcement Bulletin that specifically addressed the U visa certification process. The resource states, “With immigrant victims no longer afraid to cooperate with the police, the subsequent increase in reporting will ensure the identification and apprehension of more violent criminals” (Ivie, 2009). The FBI in this training document views the U visa as a tool not just to help victims of crimes but also help stop crimes from happening in the future. It also argues that their “law enforcement model is based on the principle that only the partnership of police and citizens can successfully address the problem of crime in communities” (Ivie, 2009). This FBI training document views fighting crime as a partnership between law enforcement and the community. When the community, isn’t afraid of cooperating with law enforcement then crime goes down because they work together to solve it.

There is no consistency on how U visa certifications are processed across the United States. Law enforcement agencies lack the organizational structure on how to process U visa certifications (Jensen, 2009). Some states have passed their own laws to address the lack of structure. For example, in 2016 California passed SB-674 called the Immigrant Victim of Crime Equity Act (SB 674, 2016). It was created to establish a statewide standard on how U visa certifications should be processed in California (Solis, 2019). California was the first state to establish a statewide effort. However, California still faces hardship in enforcing the law. For example, in 2017 90% of law enforcement agencies were not complying with SB-674 (Solis,

2017). This indicates that while California has tried to address the issue at a state level, experiences continue to vary at a local level.

State legislatures passing laws on how U visa certifications are processed is a new policy strategy. California was the first to take such bold steps. Other states passed similar legislation, including Washington state with the passage of HB-1022: Enhancing crime victim participation in the criminal justice system process (HB-1022).

On June 7, 2018, Governor Jay Inslee signed HB-1022 to establish U visa certification guidelines in Washington state (HB 1022, 2017). HB-1022 is critical for advancing immigrant rights in Washington State. The most important part of HB-1022 is that law enforcement agencies are required to sign certifications within 90 days of receipt, or 14 days for emergency cases (HB 1022, 2017). By requiring a timeline on how fast to process U visa certifications, it gives undocumented immigrants a reference on when to expect hearing back from law enforcement agencies on whether they are signing or rejecting a U visa certification.

There was much support for the passage of HB-1022. Attorney Georgina Olazoon Mozo explained that there were some law enforcement agencies who refuse or ignore U visa certifications requests (Ly, 207). By law enforcement ignoring or refusing to sign U visa certifications, they are directly violating the entire intent of VTVPA. Domestic violence agencies advocated for the passage of HB-1022. Tamaso Johnson, Policy Director at the Washington State Coalition Against Domestic Violence said, “We’ve been hearing for years that there’s a lot of inconsistency around the state in how law enforcement handles (certifications). Some law enforcement won’t sign it. Some victims won’t hear back, or not until months and months later after they asked for the certification” (Brownstone, 2018). HB-1022 was created to directly address the concerns of the U visa certification process inconsistencies across Washington State.

Since the passage of HB-1022, local law enforcement agencies are now required to make adjustments in order to comply with the law.

Chapter 3: Data, Methodology and Limitations

The following chapter will discuss what data was used for this capstone research including data made available as a result of HB-1022 and the United States Census. The chapter will also explain what methodology was used and what limitations were found.

Section 3.1: Washington State House Bill 1022

As a result of HB-1022, the Office of Crime Victims Advocacy (OCVA) is required to publish yearly information regarding U visas. Data for this capstone was retrieved from OCVA's dashboard which is located on the Washington State Department of Commerce website. OCVA has only published one annual report which captures data between July 1, 2018 through June 30, 2019 (WA State Certifying Agency Reporting, 2019). The database comprises information regarding:

- The number of victims who requested certifications;
- The number of certification forms that were signed;
- The number of certifications that were denied; and
- The number of certification forms that were withdrawn (WA State Certifying Agency Reporting, 2019).

According to HB-1022, a "certifying agency" includes a body of government that has the responsibility to investigate or prosecute criminal activity including but not limited to law enforcement agencies, prosecutors, administrative judges, hearing offices, the Washington State Patrol, the Washington Department of Labor and Industries, and the Washington Department of Social and Health Services (HB 1022, 2017). OCVA's dashboard divides certifying agencies into three categories, all of which capture how many U visas were signed, denied, withdrew, and

pending. The categories include prosecutors/attorneys, law enforcement agencies, and state agencies/judges (WA State Certifying Agency Reporting, 2019).

For the purposes of this study, the three categories of certifying agencies are all combined. This research does not distinguish certifying agency categories. Instead, this research focuses on which county the certifying agency is located in. The data was analyzed so that certifying agencies are broken up into counties regardless of which category they were placed in the dashboard by OCVA. There are thirty-nine categories in this capstone research of signed U visa certifications because there are thirty-nine counties in Washington state. These counties include Adams, Asotin, Benton, Chelan, Clallam, Clark, Columbia, Cowlitz, Douglas, Ferry, Franklin, Garfield, Grant, Grays Harbor, Island, Jefferson, King, Kitsap, Kittitas, Klickitat, Lewis, Lincoln, Manson, Okanogan, Pacific, Pend Oreille, Pierce, San Juan, Skagit, Skamania, Snohomish, Spokane, Stevens, Thurston, Wahkiakum, Walla Walla, Whatcom, Whitman, and Yakima.

Each Washington state county has a unique number of certifying agencies. There is a total of 276 certifying agencies. On average each county had 6.85 certifying agencies located in their county and the median was 5. The minimum number of certifying agencies per county was 1 and the max was 30 (Table 1). See Appendix 1 for full list of what certifying agencies were located in each county.

Table 1: Certifying Agencies Data Descriptions, by county

Agencies per County	Total
Average	6.85
Median	5
Minimum	1
Max	30
Total	267

Section 3.2: United States Census Data

This capstone will refer to hispanic/latino people as “Latinx” as the term is gender neutral. It should be noted that not all Latinx people are immigrants or undocumented in the United States. Also, undocumented immigrants in the United States are originally from all parts of the world. This is important to acknowledge because many times immigration issues in the media are referred to issues only impacting the Latinx community. For the purpose of this research, it will focus on the Latinx population in Washington state.

According to a report from the Department of Homeland Security (DHS), in 2015 there were about 12.0 million undocumented immigrants in the United States of which 55% were from Mexico (Office of Immigration Statistics, 2015). DHS predicts that about 8.9 million (75%) of undocumented immigrants were from countries in North America including El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras (Office of Immigration Statistics, 2015). Due to the high number of undocumented immigrants originating from Latin America, this capstone uses Latinx community as an indicator of where undocumented immigrants could potentially reside.

To find information on the number of Latinx people living in Washington State, this research used the United States Census Data to find the total population size in Washington State, population size per county, and how many people identified as Latinx in each county.

Section 3.3: Methodology

This report focuses on U visa certifications that were signed across Washington using data available from the Office of Crime Victims Advocacy (OCVA). My hypothesis is that there is a disparity on how many U visa certifications are processed where counties with high Latinx

populations (26% and up) are producing less than 25% of all U visa certifications in Washington State.

Research on HB-1022 data has not been conducted yet. The purpose of my research is to observe what patterns appear with available data and comparing it to Latinx population size by county. I decided to use quartile percentages for the Latinx population and signed U visa certifications because it allows me to easily summarize my large data set.

My capstone is considered a cross sectional quantitative research design. One characteristic of cross-sectional design is that the data used is from a single point in time (Cummings, 2018).

Data for this capstone was obtained from the Department of Commerce, which recorded how many U visa certifications were signed between July 1, 2018 and June 30, 2019. Since there is only data available for this period, it is appropriate to use a cross-sectional design. In addition, a cross-sectional design can be used to “identify patterns and prevalence of an outcome within a population and its subgroups at the given time point” (Cummings, 2018). Using a cross-sectional research design will help capture a snapshot and patterns on how many U visa certifications were processed between July 2018 and June 2019 and how it compares to the Latinx population size in each county. However, there are limitations in using a cross-sectional design. One limitation is that cross sectional designs “give no explanation of the sequence of events between a cause and an outcome” (Cummings, 2018). This capstone will only be able to show patterns in the data but will not be able to explain why the patterns appear.

In addition to being considered cross-sectional, this capstone is also a quantitative research design. One characteristic of quantitative research is that data collection is gathered through surveys, experiments, field research, and public data with open access (Burrell and

Gross, 2018). This capstone only used public data with open access. To find information regarding county populations size and how many residents identified as Latinx, I used the United States Census database. For gathering data regarding signed U visa certifications, data was available on the Washington State Department of Commerce website. No interviews or surveys were conducted. Data was only gathered through two government websites making this a quantitative research design.

The Census and U visa certification data is analyzed using quartiles and per-capita measurements. By using quartiles, you can divide data in “equally sized groups – into groups having the same quantity” (Vogt, 2011). Quartiles were used on both Latinx population and signed U visa certification data. In addition, per-capita was calculated to determine how many U visas were signed based on overall population size and Latinx population size in each county. Per-capita allowed me to determine how many signed U visa certifications per 100,000 county residents as well as per 100,000 county residents who identify as Latinx.

Section 3.4: Limitations

This capstone project has two limitations: 1) T visa certifications are also included in the OCVA’s data dashboard and 2) state agencies list the county their main office is located in but the U visa applicant may live in another city. This research specifically focuses on the U visa certification. However, HB-1022 requires that certifying agencies report on U and T visa certifications (HB 1022, 2017). The T visa is a form of immigration relief for undocumented immigrants who were human trafficked in the United States (T Nonimmigrant Status, 2018). Unfortunately, data provided by OCVA does not distinguish between the two visa categories. However, it is likely that the majority of the OCVA data is likely U visa certifications, not T visa

certifications. Federal law allows flexibility on when a T visa certification (Form I-914, Supplement B) is required. The T visa certification instructions on the USCIS website state:

You do not need to formally launch an investigation or file charges to complete Form I-914, Supplement B. You may complete Form I-914, Supplement B, if an investigation does not lead to an arrest or a prosecution. Completing Form I-914, Supplement B, is not contingent on the outcome of a prosecution or investigation. Completing Form I-914, Supplement B, is at your discretion. There is no statute of limitations related to completing Form I-914, Supplement B (Form I-914B, 2020).

As can be seen, T visa applicants have discretion on whether they pursue obtaining a T visa certification. As a result, it is likely that the data provided by OCVA is majority U visa certifications but there is no way to verify.

The second limitation to this research is that OCVA includes data provided by eleven state agencies including Attorney General of Washington, Washington State Patrol, and Washington State Department of Children, Youth and Families among others. While their main offices are located in one city, the applicant requesting the certification may live elsewhere. For example, the Attorney General of Washington signed one certification in the reporting period. The Attorney General's office is located in King County but since they serve all of Washington State, there is no way to verify if the U visa applicant also lives in King County.

The following information includes the state agencies that signed certifications, where their main office is located, and how many certifications they signed:

- Attorney General of Washington, King County, 1 signed certification;
- Washington State Department of Children, Youth, and Families, Thurston County, 5 signed certifications;

- Washington State Department of Labor & Industries, Thurston County, 4 signed certifications; and
- Washington State Patrol, Thurston County, 6 signed certifications.

The numbers for King County and Thurston County will be inflated. The number is especially high for Thurston county since the WA State Department of Children, Youth, and Families (5 signed certifications), WA State Department of Labor & Industries (4 signed certifications), and Washington State Patrol (6 signed certifications) all listed Thurston County. These 15 certifications will all be included under Thurston County data point and it is not possible to verify if the crime occurred in Thurston County or where the U visa applicant lives.

Chapter 4: Data Analysis

This capstone focuses on the relationship between the number of signed U visa certifications and the Latinx population in Washington state. I will do a cross sectional quantitative research design to investigate the following:

1. Washington state Latinx population by county;
2. Washington state U visa certifications by county;
3. Comparison of signed U visa certifications and Latinx population by county.

Section 4.1: Washington State Latinx Population By County

Washington state consists of 39 counties. According to the US census data, there is a total of 7,523,135 people that live in Washington State (Census Data, 2020). For the total WA state population, the average is 192,900.9 while the median is 65,507 (Table 2). The county with the least population size is Garfield county with a total of 2,224 residents (Table 3). On the other hand, the county with the highest number of residents is King County with a total of 2,233,163 residents (Table #3).

Table 2: Washington State Population, by County

County Population	Total
Average	192,900.8974
Median	6,5507
Minimum	2,224
Max	2,233,163

According to the United States Census there is a total of 966,973 Latinx people living in Washington state, making it 12.9% of the state's population (Table 3). Latinx people live in all 39 counties. The top three counties with the highest Latinx population include Yakima (49.9%),

Franklin (53.5%) and Adams (62.9%) county; the counties were least Latinx people live in includes Garfield (2.1%), Lincoln (3.3%), Jefferson (3.6%), and Stevens (3.6%) county (Figure 1). Adams, Franklin, Garfield, Lincoln, Stevens, and Yakima county are all located in eastern Washington. However, Jefferson county is in western Washington.

Figure 1: Percentage of Latinx Residents by Washington State Counties

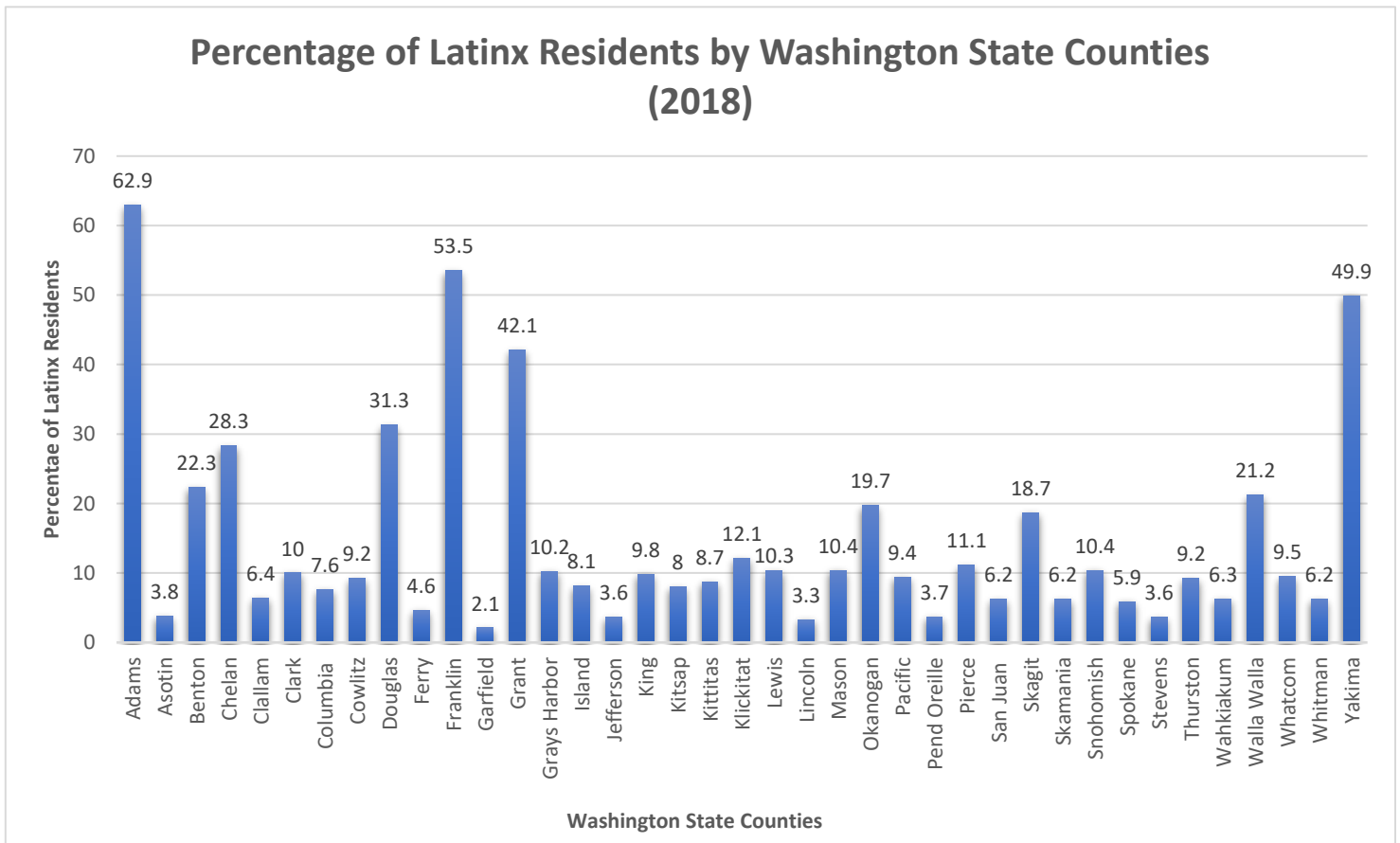
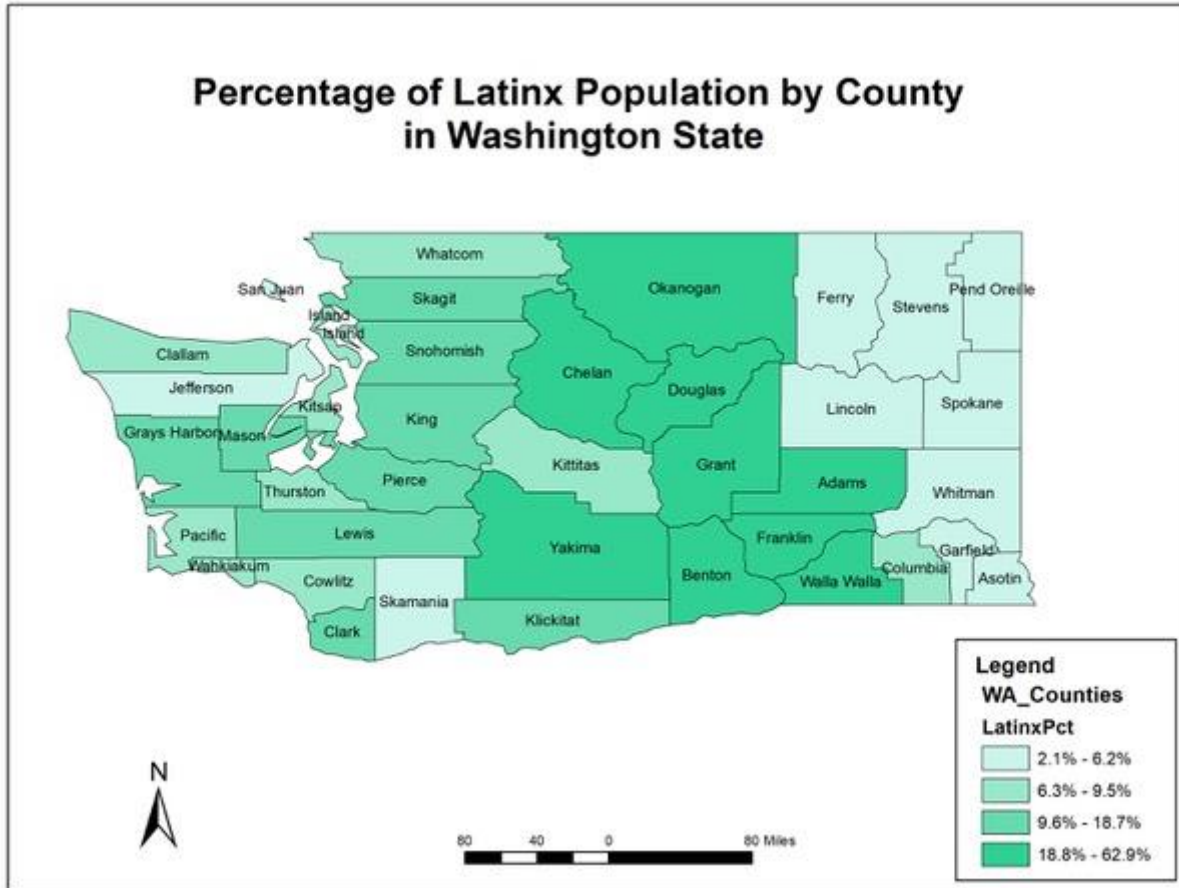


Table 3: Washington State Latinx Population by County

County	County Population Total	County Latinx Total	County Latinx Percentage
Adams	19,452	12,246	62.9%
Asotin	22,337	853	3.8%
Benton	201,877	44,919	22.3%
Chelan	77,036	21,792	28.3%

Clallam	76,737	4,933	6.4%
Clark	481,857	47,985	10%
Columbia	4,001	306	7.6%
Cowlitz	108,987	9,975	9.2%
Douglas	41,371	12,948	31.3%
Ferry	7,576	347	4.6%
Franklin	94,347	50,456	53.5%
Garfield	2,224	47	2.1%
Grant	97,331	41,005	42.1%
Grays Harbor	73,901	7,563	10.2%
Island	84,460	6,859	8.1%
Jefferson	30,856	1,102	3.6%
King	2,233,163	218,263	9.8%
Kitsap	269,805	21,523	8%
Kittitas	44,825	3,922	8.7%
Klickitat	21,396	2,581	12.1%
Lewis	79,604	8,194	10.3%
Lincoln	10,435	341	3.3%
Mason	65,507	6,801	10.4%
Okanogan	41,638	8,211	19.7%
Pacific	21,281	2,009	9.4%
Pend Oreille	13,219	483	3.7%
Pierce	891,299	99,153	11.1%
San Juan	16,473	1,024	6.2%
Skagit	128,206	23,928	18.7%
Skamania	11,620	720	6.2%
Snohomish	814,901	85,109	10.4%
Spokane	514,631	30,473	5.9%
Stevens	44,214	1,604	3.6%
Thurston	286,419	26,299	9.2%
Wahkiakum	4,189	264	6.3%
Walla Walla	60,236	12,789	21.2%
Whatcom	225,685	21,469	9.5%
Whitman	48,593	3,005	6.2%
Yakima	251,446	125,472	49.9%
TOTAL	7,523,135	966,973	12.9%

Map 1: Washington State Latinx Population by Counties



There is a total of 966,973 Latinx people who live in Washington state. By county, the average Latinx population is 24,794.18 and the median is 8,194. According to the United States Census, only 47 Latinx live in Garfield County making it the least Latinx populated county while King county had the highest amount with a total of 218,263 Latinx residents (Table 4). While there are many Latinx people in King County, they only make up 9.8% of the county population. It appears that the counties with the highest number of Latinx population are located in central Washington and the counties with the least Latinx population are mostly concentrated in Eastern Washington (Map 1).

Table 4: Washington State Latinx Population, by County

Latinx Population by County	
Average	24,794.17949
Median	8,194
Minimum	47
Max	218,263

The next step is to determine what quartile each county falls under. To do so, all the counties were lumped into quartile groups. Instead of showing their exact percentages of how many Latinx people reside in each county, they were given a number between 1-4 to signify which quartile they fell under; I tried to place an equal number of counties in each quartile but it's not possible to evenly divide because there is 39 counties which is an odd number (Table 5). The 1st quartile (Q1) means that a county has 2.1-6.2% of their population identify as Latinx. Q1 has a total of 11 counties. The 2nd quartile (Q2) means a county has between 6.3-9.5% of its population identify as Latinx. Q2 has a total of 10 counties. Quartile number 3 (Q3) has a county Latinx population between 9.6-19.7%. Q3 has a total of 10 counties. Finally, the 4th quartile (Q4) means that between 19.8-62.9% of the county population identify as Latinx. Q4 has a total of 8 counties (Table 5).

Table #5: Recoded Information for Latinx Population

Quartile	Percentage of Latinx Population in County	Recoded	Number of Counties
1st Quartile (Q1)	2.1-6.2%	1	11
2nd Quartile (Q2)	6.3-9.5%	2	10
3rd Quartile (Q3)	9.6-19.7%	3	10
4th Quartile (Q4)	19.8-62.9%	4	8

The following counties are recoded into Q1: Garfield, Lincoln, Jefferson, Stevens, Pend Oreille, Asotin, Ferry, Spokane, San Juan, Skamania, and Whitman. Counties in Q2 includes

Wahkiakum, Clallam, Columbia, Kitsap, Island, Kittitas, Cowlitz, Thurston, Pacific, and Whatcom. Counties located in Q3 include King, Clark, Grays Harbor, Lewis, Mason, Snohomish, Pierce, Klickitat, Skagit and Okanogan. Finally, counties in Q4 include Walla Walla, Benton, Chelan, Douglas, Grant, Yakima, Franklin, and Adams (Table #6).

Table 6: County Latinx Population by Quartile

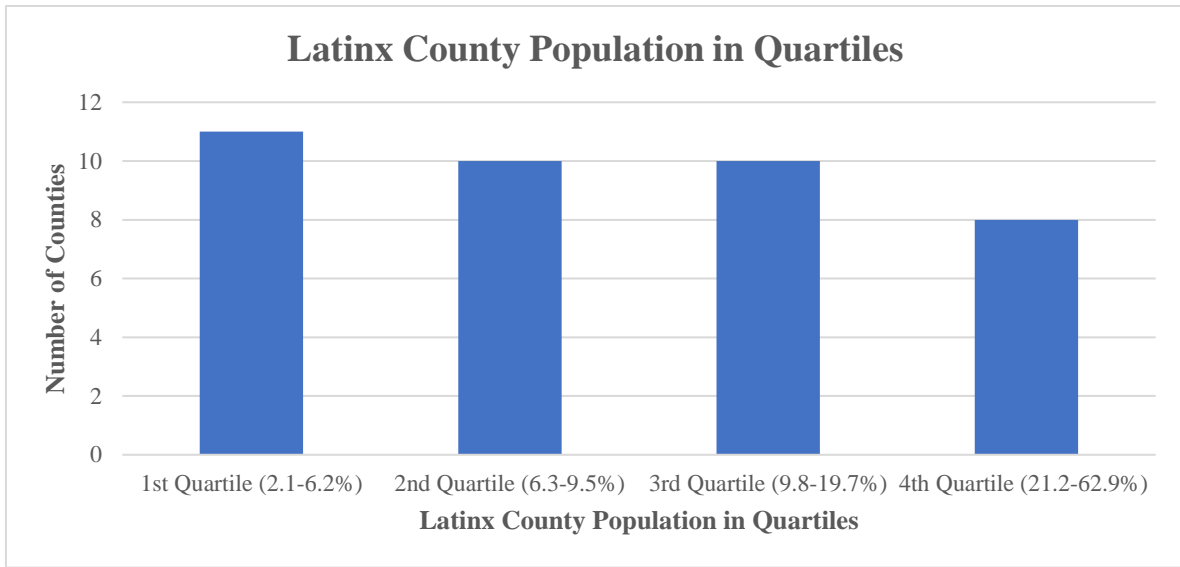
County	Percentage Latinx Population	Quartile
Garfield	2.1%	1
Lincoln	3.3%	1
Jefferson	3.6%	1
Stevens	3.6%	1
Pend Oreille	3.7%	1
Asotin	3.8%	1
Ferry	4.6%	1
Spokane	5.9%	1
San Juan	6.2%	1
Skamania	6.2%	1
Whitman	6.2%	1
Wahkiakum	6.3%	2
Clallam	6.4%	2
Columbia	7.6%	2
Kitsap	8%	2
Island	8.1%	2
Kittitas	8.7%	2
Cowlitz	9.2%	2
Thurston	9.2%	2
Pacific	9.4%	2
Whatcom	9.5%	2
King	9.8%	3
Clark	10%	3
Grays Harbor	10.2%	3
Lewis	10.3%	3
Mason	10.4%	3
Snohomish	10.4%	3
Pierce	11.1%	3
Klickitat	12.1%	3
Skagit	18.7%	3

Okanogan	19.7%	3
Walla Walla	21.2%	4
Benton	22.3%	4
Chelan	28.3%	4
Douglas	31.3%	4
Grant	42.1%	4
Yakima	49.9%	4
Franklin	53.5%	4
Adams	62.9%	4

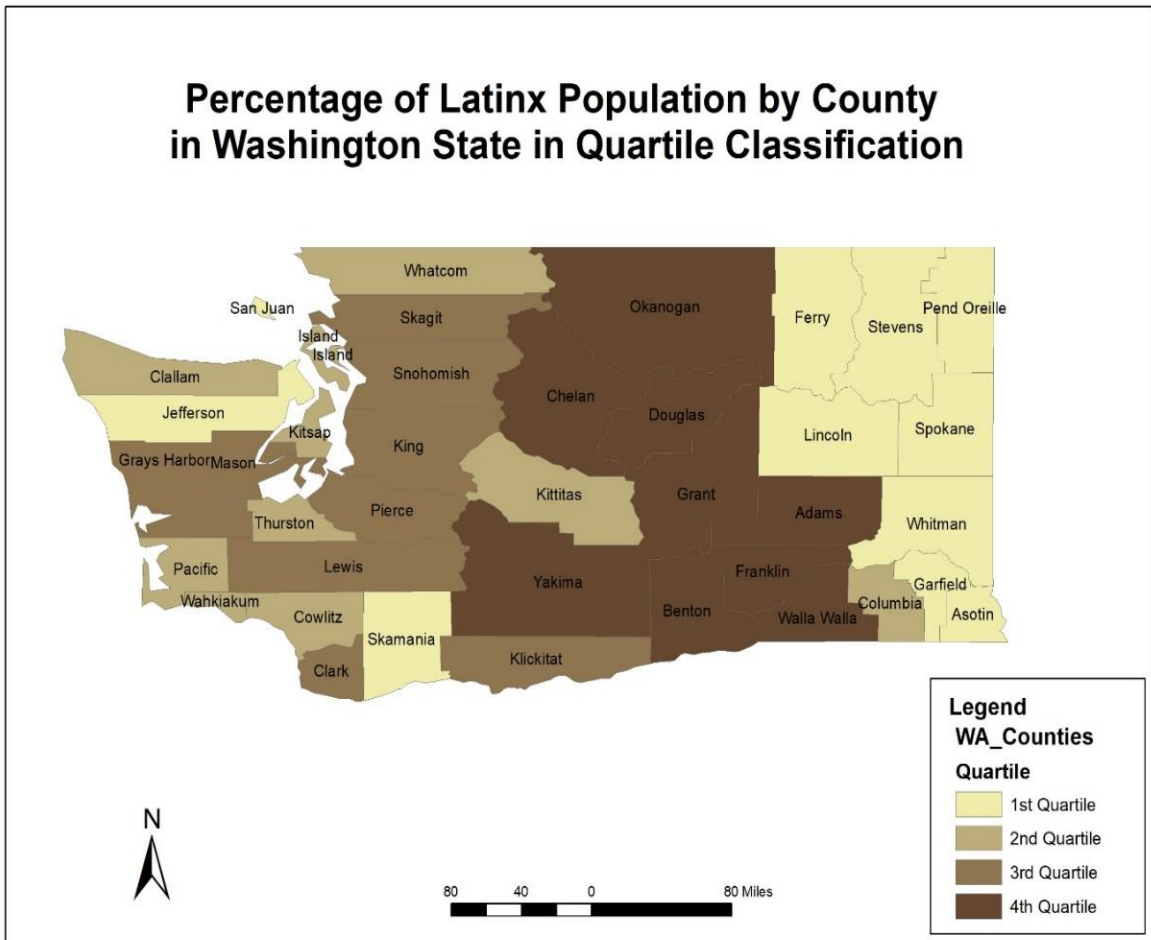
Some patterns appeared once all the counties were recoded into quartiles. First there was a total of 11 counties that had a Latinx population in Q1 (Figure 2). That means that 28.2% of Washington state counties have 2.1-6.2% of their population identify as Latinx. A total of 10 counties were placed in Q2 (Figure 2). As a result, 25.6% of all Washington state counties identified having a Latinx population size between 6.3-9.5%. In addition, 10 counties were placed in the Q3 (Figure 2). This means that 25.6% of Washington State counties has 9.6-19.7% of their population identify as Latinx. Finally, there was eight counties that were located in Q4; meaning, 20.5% of counties has 19.8-62.9% of their population identify as Latinx (Figure 2).

When looking at the Latinx population data in quartiles using a Washington state map, it is clear that the counties with the most Latinx population (Q4) are all located in central Washington (Map 2). In addition, the counties with the least Latinx population (Q1) are all concentrated in Eastern Washington (Map 2). The two Washington state maps created for this analysis, percentages and quartiles of Latinx population, both show the same pattern (Map 1 and Map 2). That is, the Latinx population in Washington State is concentrated in central Washington and the counties with the least Latinx population is in eastern Washington.

Figure 2: County Latinx Population in Quartiles



Map 2: Washington State Latinx Population by Counties in Quartile Classification



Section 4.2: Washington State U Visa Certifications By Counties

In accordance with HB-1022, the Washington State Department of Commerce (WSDC) issues yearly data on how many U visa certifications were signed in Washington State.

According to WSDC, there was a total of 1,203 signed U visa certifications between July 1, 2018 and June 30, 2019 (WA State Certifying Agency Reporting, 2019). The average is 30.8 and the median is 5, while the range is between zero and 485 signed certifications (Table 7). There is a total of 14 counties who signed zero U visa certifications between July 2018 and June 2019 (Table 8) (WA State Certifying Agency Reporting, 2019). This includes Asotin, Columbia, Ferry, Garfield, Island, Jefferson, Kittitas, Klickitat, Lincoln, Pend Oreille, San Juan, Stevens, Wahkiakum, and Whitman. Meaning, 35.9% of Washington state counties did not sign any U visa certifications between July 2018 and June 2019. It should also be noted that King county signed 485 certifications which appears to be an outlier as no other county came close to that number of signed certifications in the reporting period (Figure 3).

Table 7: U Visa Signed Certifications, by County

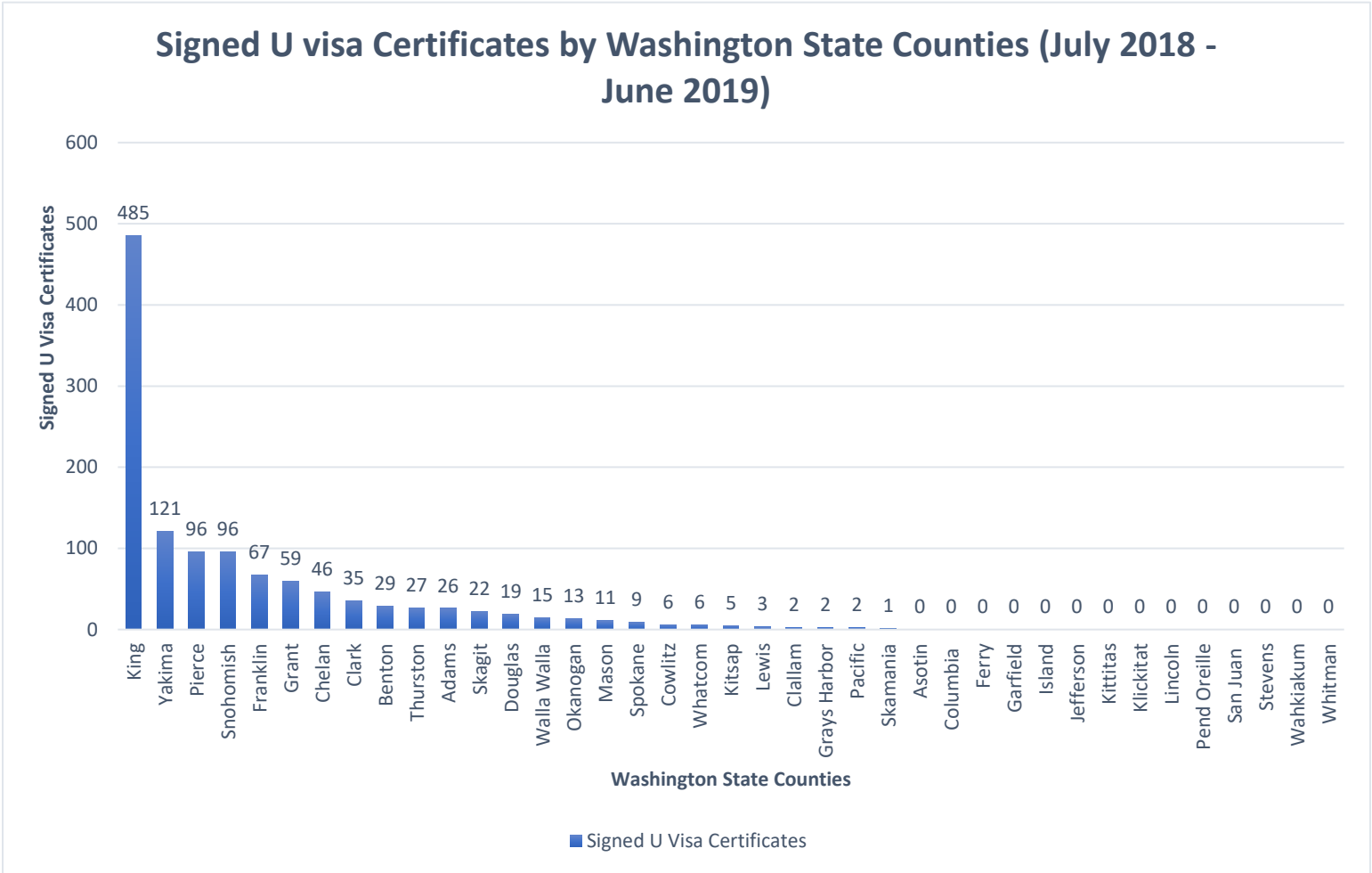
U Visa Signed Certification by County	Total
Average	30.8
Median	5
Minimum	0
Max	485
Total	1,203

Table 8: Signed U Visa Certifications in Washington State Counties

Washington State Counties	Signed U Visa Certificates
King	485
Yakima	121
Pierce	96
Snohomish	96
Franklin	67
Grant	59

Chelan	46
Clark	35
Benton	29
Thurston	27
Adams	26
Skagit	22
Douglas	19
Walla Walla	15
Okanogan	13
Mason	11
Spokane	9
Cowlitz	6
Whatcom	6
Kitsap	5
Lewis	3
Clallam	2
Grays Harbor	2
Pacific	2
Skamania	1
Asotin	0
Columbia	0
Ferry	0
Garfield	0
Island	0
Jefferson	0
Kittitas	0
Klickitat	0
Lincoln	0
Pend Oreille	0
San Juan	0
Stevens	0
Wahkiakum	0
Whitman	0
Total	1,203

Figure 3: Signed U Visa Certificates by Washington State Counties



For the purposes of this capstone, the signed U visa certification data was divided into modified quartiles. The range was between zero and 485, as that is the highest and lowest number of certifications signed per county and I tried to place an equal number of counties in each quartile (Table 8). Instead of counties displaying how many U visa certifications were signed, they were given a number between 1-4 to indicate which quartile they are part of (Table 9). As a result, the first quartile (C-Q1) represents counties that signed zero U visa certifications. The second quartile (C-Q2) ranges between 1-9 signed certifications. The third quartile (C-Q3) ranges between 10-35 signed certifications. The fourth quartile ranges between 36-485 signed certifications (Table 9).

Table 9: Signed U Visa Certifications by Quartile

Quartile	Number of Signed Certifications	Recoded	Number of Counties
1st Quartile (C-Q1)	0	1	14
2nd Quartile (C-Q2)	1-9	2	9
3rd Quartile (C-Q3)	10-35	3	9
4th Quartile (C-Q4)	36-485	4	7

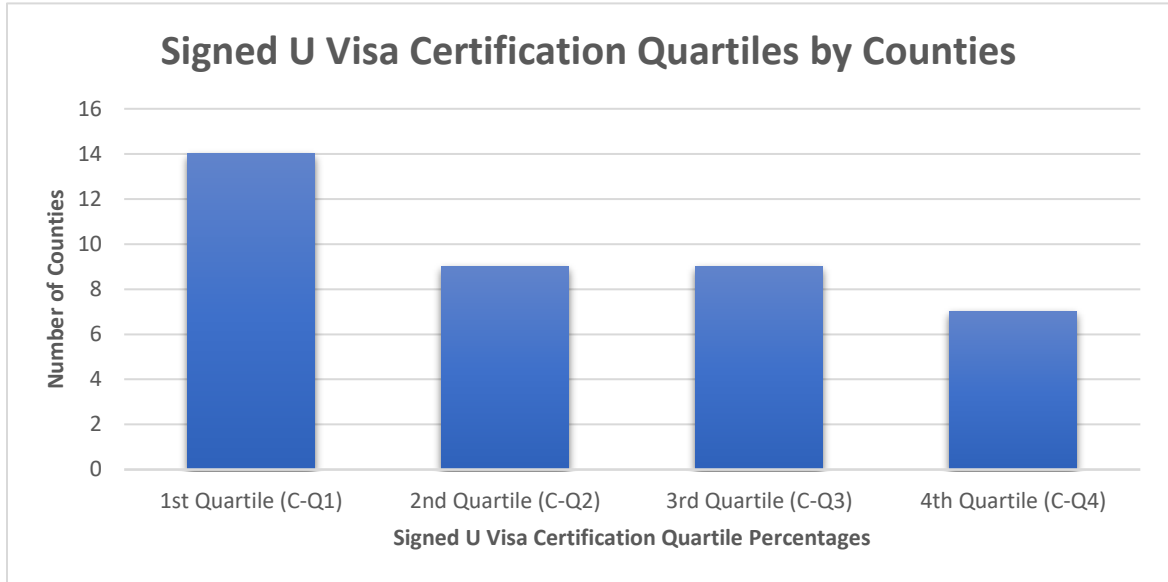
After recoding the signed U visa certification data, it was clear that the quartiles could not have an equal number of counties in each quartile. For starters there are 39 counties making it an odd number. Second, in C-Q1 there was a total of 14 counties who had zero signed U visa certifications (Table 10). Since 14 out of 39 counties are in C-Q1, the remaining counties can't be equally divided among the remaining quartiles. As a result, C-Q2 had a total of 9 counties that signed between 1-9 U visa certifications (Table 10). C-Q3 had a total of 9 counties that signed between 10-35 U visa certifications (Table 10). Finally, C-Q4 had a total of 7 counties who signed between 36-485 U visa certifications (Table 10). As can be seen, the quartile with the highest number of counties is C-Q1 (Figure 4). This means that 35.9% of Washington state counties signed zero U visa certifications which is a much higher percentage than other quartiles.

Table 10: County Signed U Visa Certifications Data Recoded

County	Number of Signed Certifications	Quartile
Asotin	0	1
Columbia	0	1
Ferry	0	1
Garfield	0	1
Island	0	1
Jefferson	0	1
Kittitas	0	1
Klickitat	0	1
Lincoln	0	1
Pend Oreille	0	1
San Juan	0	1
Stevens	0	1

Wahkiakum	0	1
Whitman	0	1
Skamania	1	2
Clallam	2	2
Grays Harbor	2	2
Pacific	2	2
Lewis	3	2
Kitsap	5	2
Cowlitz	6	2
Whatcom	6	2
Spokane	9	2
Mason	11	3
Okanogan	13	3
Walla Walla	15	3
Douglas	19	3
Skagit	22	3
Adams	26	3
Thurston	27	3
Benton	29	3
Clark	35	3
Chelan	46	4
Grant	59	4
Franklin	67	4
Pierce	96	4
Snohomish	96	4
Yakima	121	4
King	485	4
Total	1203	N/A

Figure 4: Signed U visa Certification Quartiles for Counties



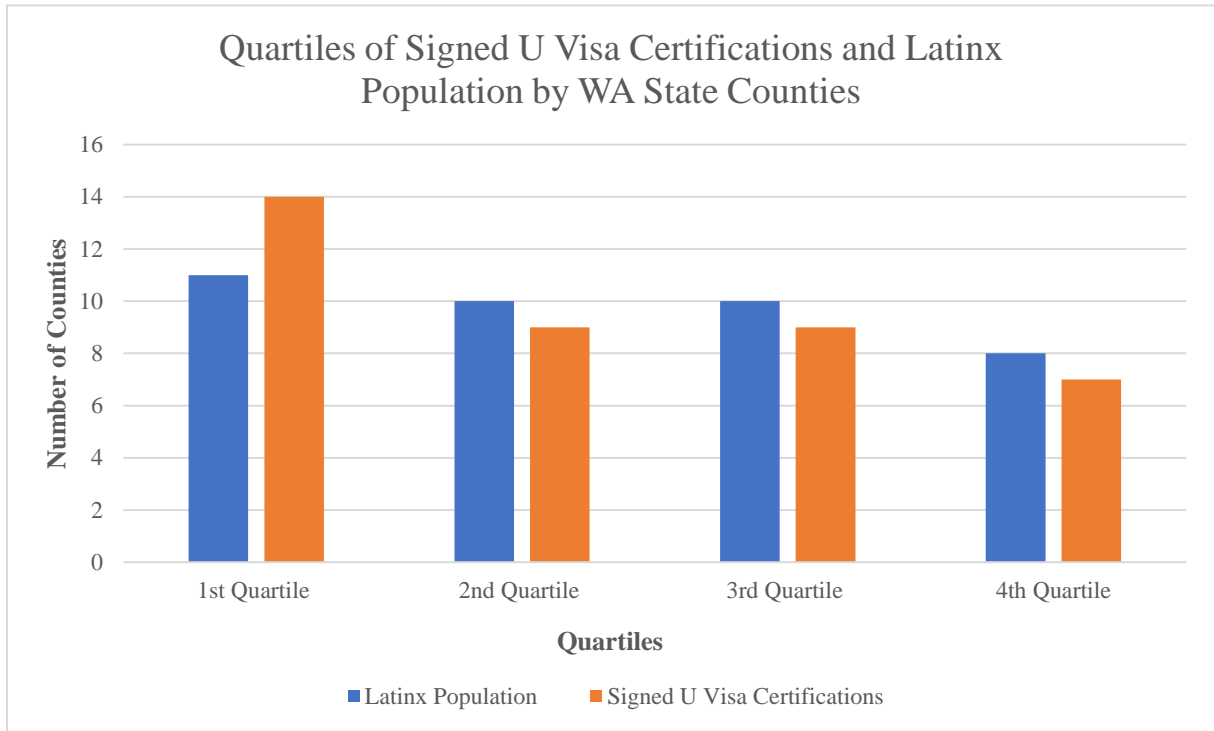
Section 4.3: Comparing Latinx Population and Signed U Visa Certifications

To determine what patterns there are between the Washington Latinx population and signed U visa certifications by county, this research will compare quartile information. Data regarding the Latinx county population percentage and number of signed U visa certifications were both recoded into quartiles allowing me to compare their data. In addition, per capita information for both data sets will also be determined and compared.

Various observations can be seen when comparing both quartile data. First, Q1 and C-Q1 both have the largest number of counties in their categories. Meaning, most counties have a Latinx population size between 2.1-6.2% and most counties signed zero U visa certifications (Figure 5). Q4 or C-14 categories had the lowest number of counties in their categories. Meaning that there are 8 counties with a Latinx population between 19.8-62.9%; but there are only 7 counties that signed between 10-485 U visa certifications (Figure 5). The data indicates that the

higher the Latinx population size, the less U visa certifications are signed in Washington state counties.

Figure 5: Quartile of Signed U visa Certifications and Latinx Population by Counties



Next, the research will find how many U visa certifications are signed per capita. This includes per capita for the entire county population and also the Latinx county population. By finding per capita information, we will be able to see how many u visa certifications are getting signed in each county every 100,000 people and per 100,000 Latinx people. Per capita information was found by dividing the number of signed certification and dividing county population total and then timing it by 100,000. The same steps were repeated by using the Latinx population size total per county.

According to the per capita calculations for the general county population, there are five top counties that are signing U visa certifications including Snohomish, Walla Walla, Yakima,

King, and Adams (Table 11). For every 100,000 county residents they are signing the following number of U visa certifications: Snohomish, 826.16; Walla Walla, 358.08; Yakima, 249.01; King, 192.88; and Adams, 133.66. However, there are 14 counties that signed zero certifications per 100,000 county residents including Asotin, Columbia, Ferry, Garfield, Island, Jefferson, Kittitas, Klickitat, Lincoln, Pend Oreille, San Juan, Stevens, Wahkiakum, and Whitman County.

When calculating per capita information using the Latinx county population size, the data changes. There are only two counties that are producing a high rate of signed certifications per 100,000 Latinx county residents including Skagit and Snohomish. Skagit county is signing 133.55 U visa certifications per-capita for the general county population but is producing 2148.44 signed certifications for every 100,000 Latinx community members (Table #11). On the other hand, Snohomish county was producing 826 signed certifications per 100,000 county residents but is signing 13,333.33 per 100,000 Latinx residents. In addition, the following counties produced zero U visa certifications per 100,000 Latinx residents. This includes Asotin, Columbia, Ferry, Garfield, Island, Jefferson, Kittitas, Klickitat, Lincoln, Pend Oreille, San Juan, Stevens, Wahkiakum, and Whitman County.

Table 11: Signed U Visa Certification Per Capita

Washington State Counties	Signed U Visa Certifications by County Population - Per Capita	Signed U visa Certifications by Latinx County Population- Per Capita
Adams	133.66	212.31
Asotin	0	0
Benton	14.37	64.56
Chelan	59.71	211.09
Clallam	2.61	40.54
Clark	7.26	72.94
Columbia	0	0
Cowlitz	5.51	60.15
Douglas	45.93	146.74
Ferry	0	0
Franklin	71.01	132.79

Garfield	0	0
Grant	60.62	143.88
Grays Harbor	2.71	26.44
Island	0	0
Jefferson	0	0
King	192.88	386.54
Kitsap	0.22	2.3
Kittitas	0	0
Klickitat	0	0
Lewis	14.02	116.23
Lincoln	0	0
Mason	105.41	3,225.81
Okanogan	19.85	191.15
Pacific	4.8	24.36
Pend Oreille	0	0
Pierce	10.77	96.82
San Juan	0	0
Skagit	133.55	2,148.44
Skamania	0.78	4.18
Snohomish	826.16	13,333.33
Spokane	1.1	10.57
Stevens	0	0
Thurston	61.07	1,683.29
Wahkiakum	0	0
Walla Walla	358.08	5,681.82
Whatcom	9.9	46.92
Whitman	0	0
Yakima	249.01	4,026.62

When comparing the two per capita datasets, there are some counties that appear to be signing a high rate of certifications per Latinx population size. This includes Manson, Skagit, Snohomish, Thurston, Walla Walla, and Yakima county (Table 11).

It is also important to look at King County’s per capita numbers. While King County produced the highest number of signed certifications (485), it was not the county that produced the most u visa certifications per capita. This is the case when using per capita for both the general population and Latinx population (Table 11). On the contrary, when solely looking at per

capita for county population and Latinx county population, Snohomish County provided the most signed U visa certifications (Table 11).

This capstone was particularly interested in counties that had a Latinx population above 26%. The hypothesis is that there is a disparity on how many U visa certifications are processed where counties with high Latinx populations (26% and up) are producing less than 25% of all U visa certifications in Washington State. Counties with a Latinx population size of 26% or higher includes Chelan, Douglas, Grant, Yakima, Adams and Franklin. By using quartiles, it can be seen that these six counties have signed U visa certifications in C-Q1. However, when looking at the per-capita information for these 6 counties, Yakima county is producing the most signed U visa certifications per 100,000 Latinx community members (Table 11). Yakima had a total of 4,026.62 signed U visa certifications per 100,000 Latinx community members (Table 11). While these six counties are doing comparably better than the majority of other Washington state counties, it's important to always keep in mind that their Latinx population is extremely high making it more likely that a U visa certification request would be submitted to a certifying agency.

The most alarming data results are the counties that produced zero U visa certifications in the reporting period. The 14 counties include Asotin, Columbia, Ferry, Garfield, Island, Jefferson, Kittitas, Klickitat, Lincoln, Pend Oreille, San Juan, Stevens, Wahkiakum, and Whitman County. Since there are only 39 counties it means that 35.9% of Washington State Counties signed zero certifications. While the data doesn't explain why these 35.9% of WA state counties produced zero signed certifications, one possibility is that more community outreach needs to be done in these counties so that undocumented victims of crimes know that this is a resource available to them. It is especially important that outreach materials be made in various

languages appropriate to community needs. This is especially important because the victim of the crime or their attorney need to initiate the process by submitting the certification request to a certifying agency. Another potential explanation may be that certifying agencies need to be better trained and informed about the U visa. The U visa was created by Congress as a resource to agencies who investigate crimes. Certifying agencies need to be better informed about the U visa and ensure that their community is aware of this resource and what their certification process is. Through staff training and community outreach, it is possible that these counties would start receiving U visa certification request.

Chapter 5: Conclusion

Being a victim of a crime can be a traumatic and overwhelming experience for anyone. Crimes can occur in various settings including work, school, or home. Undocumented immigrants in the United States already face many systemic barriers due to their lack of immigration status. They are under constant fear of ICE officers and deportation. When they become victims of crimes, they face additional barriers trying to access the social justice system than a crime victim with legal status. Undocumented immigrants may be fearful of reporting crimes or participating in investigations due to fear of deportation. As a result, the U visa was created as a tool so that law enforcement could investigate crimes when working with undocumented immigrants (8 USC §1101(a)(15)(U)(i)).

The U visa has a long legislative history from creation to implementation. While its passage had support from both democrats and republicans, the U visa rules were not immediately released (Utah Bar Journal, 2016). More importantly, U visa certification guidelines have changed over time and across various presidential offices. In addition, U visa certification processes vary wildly not only depending by state but also by certifying agency. This is troublesome, especially when an immigrant becomes a crime victim in a location with anti-immigrant sentiment or where their law enforcement agency is not aware of the U visa.

Washington State is a pioneer in developing U visa certification guidelines across all state certifying agencies. In 2018, the WA state legislature passed House Bill 1022, Enhancing Crime Victim Participation in the Criminal Justice System Process (HB-1022) and required that data be gathered early on how many certifications were processed, signed, denied and withdrawn from all certifying agencies (HB 1022, 2017). The data is posted online through the Washington State Department of Commerce. As of this capstone, only one data set has been published online

which captures data between July 2018 and June 2019. The data analysis suggests that the higher Latinx population in a county, the less signed U visa certifications. In addition, the data shows that 35.9% of Washington State counties signed zero U visa certifications between July 2018 and June 2019. That is over a third of all Washington state counties.

Using a cross-sectional quantitative research method, this capstone attempted to find patterns between U visa signed certifications and Washington state counties. In addition, I used Census data to identify how many Latinx people lived in each county. Cross-sectional quantitative research only captures a snapshot in time to find patterns. It cannot explain why these patterns occurred. Future research needs to occur to clearly understand the data, especially when comparing it to the Latinx population size. It is advised that a mixed methods research be conducted. Ideally, it would include quantitative and qualitative data. The qualitative data could include interviews with undocumented immigrants who reside in counties where the Latinx population size is higher than 25% to see what their experience was like when requesting a U visa certification.

Acknowledgements

I owe my educational achievement to my family, friends, mentors, and community for supporting me through this journey.

Special thank you to Professor Jin-Kyu Jung. Your support and guidance on my capstone was incredibly important for my achievement. Thank you for your patience, support, and kindness. You are by far the most thoughtful and amazing Professor I have ever had. Thank you for sharing your knowledge with me and students. The University of Washington is so lucky to have a professor like you.

To my parents – Ustedes caminaron mucho para que yo pudiera llegar más lejos. Los quiero mucho.

To my sisters – Thank you for providing me with endless laughs and love. You are my world.

To my partner – Thank you for supporting me emotionally through graduate school. Your constant support in big and small ways made a difference. Te amo.

To my cats – Endless cuddles while reading and editing helped tremendously.

To Krista Jensen – You are my second mom. Thank you for supporting me throughout my B.A. and Master's degree.

To Lauren Vlas – I am so thankful that we did this journey together. I look up to you so much and am grateful for your friendship.

To Carolyn Busch – Thank you for supporting me as I did full-time school and work. I'm grateful for all of your encouragement and support. You made statistics not so scary!

To UWB, Go-Map and the Domingo/Viernes Families – Thank you for investing in me. I promise to continue fighting for our community, especially immigrants.

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Appendix

Appendix #1: Washington State Counties and Certifying Agencies

Washington State Counties	Certifying Agencies
Adams	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adams County Prosecutors Office/Ritzville Police Department • Othello Police Department
Asotin	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Asotin County Prosecuting Attorney's Office • Asotin County Sheriff's Office • Asotin Police Department • Clarkston Police Department
Benton	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Benton County Sheriff's Office • Benton County Prosecuting Attorney • City of Kennewick Attorney's Office • City of Richland Prosecutor's Office • City of West Richland Prosecutor's Office • Kennewick Police Department • Prosser Police Department • Richland Police Department • West Richland Police Department
Chelan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chelan County Prosecuting Attorney • Chelan County Sheriff's Office • Wenatchee City Attorney's Office • Wenatchee Police Department
Clallam	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • City of Forks/Forks Police Department • Clallam County Prosecuting Attorney's Office • Clallam County Sheriff's Office • Port Angeles Police Department/City of Port Angeles • Sequim Police Department
Clark	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Battle Ground Police Department • Camas Police Department • City of Battle Ground • Clark County Prosecuting Attorney's Office • Clark County Sheriff's Office • La Center Police • Ridgefield Police Department • Vancouver City Attorney's Office • Vancouver Police Department • Washington State University Vancouver Police Department • Washougal Police Department
Columbia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Columbia County Prosecuting Attorney/Columbia County Sheriff's Office

Cowlitz	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Castle Rock Police • Cowlitz County Law Enforcement Records • Cowlitz County Prosecuting Attorney's Office • Kalama Police Department • Kelso Police Department • Longview Police Department/City of Longview • Woodland Police Department
Douglas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • City of East Wenatchee • Coulee Dam Police • Douglas County Prosecutor's Office/Douglas County Sheriff's Office • East Wenatchee Police Department
Ferry	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ferry County Prosecuting Attorney's Office • Ferry County Sheriff's Office • Republic Police Department
Franklin	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • City of Pasco Prosecutor's Office • Connell Police Department • Franklin County Prosecutor's Office • Franklin County Sheriff's Office • Pasco Police Department • Port of Pasco Airport
Garfield	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Garfield County Sheriff's Office • Garfield County Prosecutor's Office
Grant	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grand Coulee Police Department • Grant County Prosecutor's Office/Grant County Sheriff's Office/Ephrata PD/City of Ephrata • Mattawa Police Department • Moses Lake Police Department • Royal City Police Department • Quincy Police Department • Soap Lake Police Department • Warden Police Department
Grays Harbor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • City of Aberdeen Police Department • Cosmpolis Police Department • Elma Police Department • Grays Harbor County Sheriff's Office • Grays Harbor Prosecuting Attorney's Office • Hoquiam Police Department • McCleary Police Department • Montesano Police Department • Ocean Shores Police Department • Westport Police Department
Island	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • City of Oak Harbor - City Attorney's Office • Island County Prosecuting Attorney

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Island County Sheriff's Office • Jefferson County Sheriff's Office • Jefferson Prosecuting Attorney's Office • Langley Police Department • Oak Harbor Police Department
Jefferson	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Port Townsend Police Department/City of Port Townsend Attorney's Office
King	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Algona Police Department • Attorney General of Washington • Bellevue Police Department/City of Bellevue • Black Diamond Police Department • Bothell Police Department • City of Auburn Prosecutor's Office/Auburn Police Department • City of Des Moines Police Department • City of Kent Police Department and Office of the City Attorney • Clyde Hill Police Department • City of Seattle Attorney's Office • Duvall Police Department • Des Moines City Attorney's Office • Enumclaw Police Department • Federal Way Police Department/City of Federal Way • Issaquah Police Department • King County Prosecuting Attorney • King County Sheriff's Office • Kirkland Police Department/City of Kirkland • Lake Forest Park Police Department • Medina Police Department • Mercer Island Police Department/City of Mercer Island • Normandy Park Police Department • Pacific Police Department • Port of Seattle Police Department • Redmond Police Department/City of Redmond • Renton Police Department • Seattle Police Department • Snoqualmie Police Department • Tukwila Police Department • University of Washington Police Department
Kitsap	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bainbridge Island Police Department • Bremerton Police Department • City of Bremerton Attorney's Office • City of Poulsbo Prosecutor's Office • Cle Elum Police Department • Ellensburg Police Department/City of Ellensburg

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kitsap County Prosecutor's Office • Kitsap County Sheriff's Office • Port Orchard Police Department • Poulsbo Police Department
Kittitas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Central Washington University Police Department • Kittitas County Prosecuting Attorney's Office • Kittitas County Sheriff's Office • Kittitas Police Department
Klickitat	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bingen-White Salmon Police Department • Goldendale Police Department • Klickitat County Prosecuting Attorney's Office/Klickitat County Sheriff's Office
Lewis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • City of Centralia/Centrailia Police Department • Chehalis Police Department • Lewis County Prosecuting Attorney's Office/Lewis County Sheriff's Office Morton Police Department • Napavine Police Department • Pre Ell Police Department • Toledo Police Department
Lincoln	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lincoln County Prosecuting Attorney • Lincoln County Sheriff's Office • Odessa Police Department • Reardan Police Department
Mason	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mason County Prosecutor's Office • Manson County Sheriff's Office • Shelton Police Department
Okanogan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brewster Police Department • Okanogan County Prosecuting Attorney's Office • Okanogan County Sheriff's Office • Omak Police Department • Oroville Police Department • Twisp Police Department • Winthrop Marshal's Office
Pacific	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Long Beach Police Department • Pacific County Prosecutor's Office • Pacific County Sheriff's Office • Raymond Police Department • South Bend Police Department
Pend Oreille	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Newport Police Department • Pend Oreille County Prosecuting Attorney • Pend Oreille County Sheriff's Office

Pierce	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • City of Lakewood/Lakewood Police Department • City of Tacoma Prosecution Division • Bonney Lake Police Department • Buckley Police Department • DuPont Police Department • Eatonville Police Department • Fife Police Department/City of Fife • Fircrest Police Department • Gig Harbor Police • Milton Police Department • Orting Police Department • Pierce County Prosecuting Attorney • Pierce County Sheriff's Department • Puyallup Police Department/City of Puyallup • Roy Police Department • Ruston Police Department • Steilacoom Department of Public Safety • Sumner Police Department/City of Sumner • Tacoma Police Department
San Juan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • San Juan County Prosecuting Attorney/San Juan County Sheriff's Office
Skagit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Anacortes Police Department • Burlington Police Department • City of Burlington Attorney's Office • City of Mount Vernon • City of Sedro-Woolley/Sedro-Woolley Police Department • Mount Vernon Police Department • Skagit County Sheriff's Office • Skagit County Prosecuting Attorney
Skamania	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Skamania County Prosecuting Attorney • Skamania County Sheriff's Office
Snohomish	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Arlington Police Department • Brier Police Department • City of Everett Prosecuting Attorneys Office/Everett Police Department • Edmonds Police Department • Lake Stevens Police Department • Lynwood Police Department • Marysville Police Department/City of Marysville • Mill Creak Police Department • Monroe Police Department • Mountlake Terrace Police Department • Mukilteo Police Department • Snohomish County Prosecutor's Office

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Snohomish County Sheriff's Office • Snohomish Police Department/City of Snohomish Attorney's Office • Stanwood Police Department
Spokane	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Airway Heights Police Department • Cheney Police Department • City of Spokane Prosecutor's Office • Eastern Washington University Police Department • Liberty Lake Police Department • Spokane Police Department • Spokane County Prosecuting Attorney • Spokane County Sheriff's Office/Spokane Valley PD
Stevens	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chewelah Police Department • Colville Police Department • Kettle Falls Police Department • Stevens County Prosecuting Attorney • Stevens County Sheriff's Office
Thurston	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • City of Olympia Prosecutor's Office • Evergreen State College Police Department • Lacey Police Department • Office of Administrative Hearings • Olympia Police Department • Tenino Police Department • Thurston County Prosecuting Attorney's Office • Thurston County Sheriff's Office • Tumwater Police Department • WA State Department of Children, Youth, and Families • Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife Police • Washington State Department of Labor & Industries • Washington State Patrol • Yelm Police Department
Wahkiakum	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wahkiakum County Prosecutor's Office • Wahkiakum County Sheriff's Office
Walla Walla	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • College Place Police Department • Walla Walla Sheriff's Office • Walla Walla Police Department • Walla Walla County Prosecutor's Office

Whatcom	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • City of Bellingham-City Attorney's Office • Bellingham Police Department • Blaine Police Department • Everson Police Department • Ferndale Police Department • Lynden Police Department • Sumas Police Department • Western Washington University Police Department • Whatcom County Prosecutor's Office • Whatcom County Sheriff's Office
Whitman	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • City of Palouse/Town of Garfield Police Department • Colton Police Department • Pullman Police Department • Whitman County Prosecutor's Office • Whitman County Sheriff's Office/Colfax Police Department • Washington State University Police
Yakima	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • City of Yakima Legal Department/Yakima Police Department • Grandview Police Department • Granger Police Department • Mabton Police Department • Moxee Police Department • Selah Police Department/City of Selah • Sunnyside Police Department • Tieton Police Department • Toppenish Police Department • Union Gap Police Department • Wapato Police Department • Yakima County Prosecuting Attorney's Office • Yakima County Sheriff's Office • Zillah Police Department