Teachers' Views on Deportations, DACA, and a Pathway to Citizenship

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Abstract

This analysis of quantitative data from a nationwide sample of k-12 teachers (N=4,600) examines teachers' views on a range of modern immigration issues including DACA, the scope of deportations, levels of immigration, and a pathway to citizenship. Overall, teachers showed more inclusive stances towards immigration overall. However, there appeared to be a more inclusive response to immigrants already in the country than new immigrants entering the nation. There were also statistically significant differences based on age, race and ethnicity, region of the country, and political party. These variances are examined deeper in the text. These results are of vital importance for teachers and teacher educators given the realities with which immigration discussions and debates have affected both the society and the classroom. The larger contention is that teachers' views on these contentious issues of modern immigration are not just abstract, societal views but have deep relevance to their positionality as teachers, mentors, and advocates.

Keywords: immigration, teachers' beliefs, critical border and migration studies

Introduction

There have been many contentious issues about immigration in recent U.S. history. Long before the recent rise of more restrictive immigrant rhetoric and policies under Trump (Finley & Esposito, 2020; Vareo Campos, 2018), there were debates over issues like a pathway to citizenship, border funding, and in-state tuition rates for undocumented students. Many immigrant debates were present under past presidents such as George W. Bush and Barack Obama (Gonzales, 2010; Som & Momblanco, 2006). Immigration certainly has become more central in the national political debate with the rise of leaders like Donald Trump. At least before the chaos that ensued with COVID-19 in 2020, there was a significant focus nationally on immigration policy whether over the issues of DACA, the child separation policy, or the border wall. Considering the more restrictive immigrant policies of the Trump administration, the views of Americans are actually somewhat surprising. At the end of the presidency of Trump, there were more inclusive attitudes towards undocumented immigrants and immigration overall. For example, 34% of Americans said they wanted immigration levels increased in 2020 compared to only 17% in 2010 (Gallup Polling, 2020). This article examines the views of teachers on modern issues of immigration. The contention being that teachers views' on immigration not only are important due to the pedagogical implications but also the relationship between teachers and immigrant students (Sas, 2009; McCorkle, 2019; Van den

Bergh, Denessen, Hornstra, Voeten, & Holland, 2010). An examination of these views is also important given the implications of immigration policy under the Biden Administration.

Literature Review

Teachers' Attitudes on Trump's Policies

Though there has been substantial national polling on the approval or disapproval of the Trump administration overall, there has been limited research on the views of educators towards Trump's policies. Rogers et al. (2017) demonstrate teachers' reflections on the changing classroom environment due to the shifting policies of the Trump administration. For example, 53% of teachers in primarily minority schools said their students were concerned about Trump's deportation policies. Teachers also stated that there was an increase in students making derogatory remarks in light of the new social and political environment under Trump. Relevant scholarship also explores how teachers have responded to the new political environment. Dunn, Sondel, and Baggett (2019) examine the different responses of teachers nationwide in light of the realities of the Trump Administration. They highlight the sense of fear that is sometimes present in taking a more social justice approach. They also found that most teachers stated they did not vote for Trump. Social studies scholars, Sibbett and Au (2018), called on teachers to take on a more social justice based approach given the realities of the Trump area, one that is honest in looking at issues of oppression but also seeks to lead students into action. This research seeks to explore some of the gaps in the research regarding teachers' perspectives on Trump's policies.

Teachers' Attitudes towards Immigration and Immigrant Students

The research on teachers' views towards immigration specifically is somewhat limited in the research though there are some notable studies that focus on this subject. Sas (2009) in her study found that teachers overall had more inclusive views in regard to issues of legal immigration and more inclusive views on issues of immigration were related to more positive attitudes towards issues related to emergent bilingual students. Cruz (2014) also examines teachers' attitudes towards issues related to rights for immigrant students. She found that when teachers attended a workshop on issues related to immigration, they tended to have more inclusive attitudes. McCorkle (2018a) examined teachers' broad, abstract views on immigration, migration, and borders and found that teachers overall had more inclusive views. There was also a significant correlation between views on these more abstract views on immigration and more positive attitudes towards rights for immigrant students. From a more qualitative perspective, Howrey (2018) found that when pre-service teachers were exposed to positive counter-narratives about immigrants some tended to gain a more empathetic and broader understanding of immigrants' experiences, including one teacher who had previously "depersonalized and criminalized" immigrants to one who began to see them as "people with feelings and needs like her own" (p.10).

Teachers' Attitudes towards ELL Students and Pedagogy

There has been more extensive research on attitudes towards emergent bilingual students. While these two groups of students are not synonymous and research on emergent bilingual students often strongly centers on attitudes towards accommodations, which can be a separate issue

from issues such as rights for immigrants, there can be strong relevance in this area. Youngs & Youngs (2001) found that teachers had more inclusive attitudes toward emergent bilingual students if they had multicultural experiences such as living outside the United States or had taken courses in foreign language or multiculturalism. Similarly, Byrnes, Kiger, and Manning (1997) discovered that teachers who had taken graduate courses, had more formal training in ESL, or had experience working with students from ELL backgrounds had more inclusive stances. Shim & Shur (2018) found that among the ELL teachers in their study, there was often an unacademic and unhelpful insistence on English only. They also saw a disconnect in how they saw the ELL classroom and the students' perspectives. Reeves (2006) discovered that while teachers overall had a more inclusive stance towards inclusion of ELL students in the abstract, there was more skepticism to the positive impact ELL students had on the non-ELL students as well as a hesitancy to mainstream students too quickly. Most teachers thought they had adequate understanding of how to work with ELL students and thus interest in further professional development was less robust. Garcia, Sulik, and Obradović (2019) discovered that teachers often ranked ELL students as having lower executive functioning than non-ELL students demonstrating the possible dangers that unintentional biases may have on ELL students.

Walker-Dalhouse, Sanders, and Dalhouse (2009) found in a study of pre-service social studies that pairing students with ELL students as pen pals led to them feeling more confidence in working with ELL students as compared to their peers who were not part of the pen pal program. The program also appeared to not only improve knowledge of refugee students but also create a chance for more accommodating attitudes to develop. This study confirms the findings from Byrnes, Kiger, and Manning (1997) that more interaction with ELL students led to more inclusive stances in regard to ELL education.

Limitations in Understanding Teachers' Views

One of the issues with this particular area of research is that it is often difficult to obtain an honest answer from teachers about their true views towards their students, in this case towards their immigrant students. It is therefore important to implement a form of indirect questioning (Fisher, 1993) that examines their broader views towards immigration issues overall and then examine any possible implicit attitudes (Greenwald and Krieger, 2006; Riegle-Crumb & Humphries. 2012) teachers may have towards immigrant students. For example, a teacher may not say that they will treat their immigrant students differently in the classroom, but if they argue that all undocumented immigrants should be deported there could be a strong possibility that they might have negative implicit attitudes or even explicit attitudes towards undocumented students in their class (McCorkle, 2018a).

Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework for this paper is Critical Border and Migration Studies (Carens, 1987, McCorkle, 2020, Parker-Vaughan-Williams, 2012). Critical Border and Migration Studies is based in the belief that the modern conceptions about borders and migration need to be re-examined and critiqued. This theoretical framework goes beyond merely having more inclusive attitudes towards modern immigration issues. These more inclusive attitudes can still be present, perhaps due to partisan allegiance, while still holding to more restrictive paradigms of immigration.

Critical Border and Migration studies seek to deconstruct the whole notion of restrictive immigration and expand on often controversial subjects like open borders and the intrinsic rights of individuals to cross borders (Anderson, Sharma, and Wright, 2009; Bregman, 2016). Perhaps the best analogy that fits well within this paradigm is from Carens (1987) who compares restrictive immigration to the feudal system. People are born on a piece of land and are told they have to stay there regardless of what it means for their life outcomes. Carens asks if modern immigration restrictions are similar to this system. While it is true that in most nations individuals are allowed to leave their place of birth, if they are not allowed to enter another country, is it a de facto feudal system? As Carens asks, if we see the feudal system as unjust why do we not hold the same standard for modern immigration restrictions? Other authors like Basik (2012) and Bregman (2016) argue that restrictive immigration is actually the greatest form of discrimination, as place of birth more than any other area determines life outcomes, even more than areas like race and gender. At least in theory we are against discrimination in areas like race and gender, but we seem to be accepting of them when it relates to national origin.

In a similar vein to this theory is the idea that immigration itself should not be seen as a controversial issue but one that is quite common to the history of humanity. Dabach et al. (2018) argue the classroom discussions that make every immigration issue into a large controversy actually tend to distort realities of immigration and turn it from one that is about justice to one that is merely a partisan, debatable issue. In other words, is it a morally nuanced issue if a refugee should be allowed to escape their country of persecution or is that a basic human right that we should uphold, but have only made controversial due to nationalistic concerns? Monreal and McCorkle (2020) examine how social studies textbooks often uphold this idea of controversy in regard to modern immigration while normalizing historic immigration.

The idea of critical border and migration studies is also concerned with the macro economic implications. Authors such as Bregman (2016) argue that the greatest way to assist developing countries is not to send direct aid but to instead open up the borders for workers to freely migrate to and from their country of origin. This could also mean greater economic growth for the often wealthier destination nation (Storesletten, 2000). This is the reason why many economists on both the right and left have more pro-immigrant stances and are more opposed towards large scale immigration restrictions because the economic data does not support the validity of these restrictions (Blanco, 2017).

As McCorkle (2020) highlights, critical border and migration studies may lead educators to the view of immigration that was largely held by the US government until the early 20th century, largely open borders. As Ngai (2014) highlights, for much of our history immigrants that came to the country, particularly through Ellis Island, were allowed to enter. They were a few exceptions made for those who were visibly sick or thought to be involved in organized crime or prostitution, but at certain times over 99% of individuals were allowed to enter the country. Ettinger (2009) also highlights that this open border policy not only applied to areas like Ellis Island, but also to the now contentious Mexican-American border. In many cases there were not even government agents there to control the flow of migrants into the country. Even into the 20th century, after the more restrictive immigration restrictions were put in place, exceptions were made for those in Latin America due to the strong labor they provided to the agriculture sector in the Southwest.

This focus on critical border and migration studies also highlights the inequalities that restrictive immigration creates, as the border largely exist to stop the migration of poorer populations while easily crossing borders is seen as a sign of success for the wealthy (Fortier, 2006). The goal with these theories in education is that they will not only help educators re-examine their views on

borders, but that they will help center the experiences and power of immigrant students and remove the deficit thinking that is often applied to immigrant students (Cervantes-Soon & Carrillo, 2016; Ramirez, Ross, & Jimenez-Silva, 2016), particularly those who come from poor and undocumented backgrounds. As Abu El-Haj (2009) argues, a revived vision can help bring students into a broader understanding of citizenship engagement as opposed to just the more traditional forms (voting, holding public office, etc.) that might be denied to those who are not citizens. Olmos (2019) argues that in approaching immigration there needs to be a centering of the actual experiences of immigrants and a consideration of the role that race, economics, and neoliberalism play in the experiences of immigrant communities.

Critical border and migration studies informs this study and analysis by helping to illuminate the ideological rationale behind the attitudes and beliefs of teachers on these specific issues related to modern immigration in the United States. This framework is particularly useful in seeking to understand the responses to issues that may be more structural and outside of the specific context of Trump such as allowing immigration to be increased or allowing the majority of undocumented immigrants in the country to have a pathway to citizenship. These questions reach outside the specific support or rejection of time-sensitive, controversial policies and instead reveal broader beliefs about borders and migration in general.

Methods

The study is based on a quantitative correlational design. In this way, the research does not seek to claim a causal relationship between variables but rather seeks to understand the broader relationship between variables (Johnson, 2001; Thompson et al., 2005).[1] This research seeks to examine both the broader descriptive statistics of each individual item related to modern immigration issues as well as the differences based on different demographic factors such as race, gender, and age. Additionally, there is an analysis of the relationship between attitudes on modern immigration issues and the broader beliefs about borders and migration, as well as views on nationalism. Similarly, there is an analysis about how these views on modern immigration issues relate to teachers' attitudes towards educational rights for immigrant students.

Instrument

This instrument was largely self-generated by the author given the specificity of the issue studied and the more contemporary nature of the issues being addressed.[2] The items was generated by the author in 2017 given the current event issues that were related to immigration policy at the time. Most notably the survey examined the areas of DACA, the travel ban that President Trump enacted in the early days of his presidency, the policy of mass deportation, and a pathway to citizenship for undocumented immigrants. Two more general questions were also included related to allowing refugees to stay in the country and whether immigration levels should increase, decrease, or remain roughly the same. These items were added to the broader survey that sought to examine

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1. This research has IRB approval given its focus on the beliefs of human research subjects.

2. The nationalism questions (including the questions on refugees and immigration being increased/decreased) were taken from the ISSP (1995) multinational survey, specifically the questions analyzed by Coenders and Scheepers (2003). The broader idea of understanding teachers' attitudes was inspired from the studies of Cruz (2014) and Sas (2009).

teachers' views on rights for immigrant students, awareness of immigration restrictions, nationalism, and broader attitudes towards borders and migration. The relationship between beliefs about modern immigration issues and some of these constructs are analyzed in the findings section.

A factor analysis was used with these items on modern immigration, which revealed that these items had an eigenvalue of 3.92 that accounted for 65.34% of the variance. The items had a Cronbach alpha of .895. There factor analysis with the correlational commonalities that show the construct validity of the instrument can be found in Table 1 of the Appendix. This instrument is limited in that some focus on specific issues of immigration related to the Trump immigration, and therefore may be limited in understanding certain attitudes outside of the context of a more controversial figure. In retrospect, the item on refugees should have been changed to refugees being allowed to enter rather than being allowed to stay, as few respondents were in favor of ejecting refugees already in the country.

Sample

The sample came from another project that the researcher worked on previously (Author et al., 2019). It was based on the sampling plan of Wright et al. (2015) based on congressional districts. A form of a multistage sampling plan (Acharya, Prakash, Saxena, & Nigam, 2013) was used by selecting congressional districts based on interval sampling and then random sampling to select the school districts and schools from which to gather teachers' emails.

Congressional districts were arranged by population density and then the second and every fourth district were chosen for a total of 109 districts. Wright et al. (2015) define this as an interval sampling plan where "the districts were geographically dispersed, but also that they encompassed a range of settings including rural, urban central city, suburban, and small town locations" (p. 193). Within those districts, a form of random sampling was used where all the school districts were aligned alphabetically and then the second, fourth, and fifth district were selected. If there was only one school district in the congressional district, that district was chosen. A similar sampling pattern was then used with the K-12 schools within those specific districts. Once the schools were selected, the publicly available emails were gathered from classroom teachers at the selected schools. This sample did not include school administrators or counselors, neither did it apply to specialists in areas such as speech pathology. The survey was sent out to the teachers from these selected schools and followed up with two reminder surveys. There were a total of 5190 respondents that answered the survey with 4600 that answered the specific questions related to modern immigration.

Analytical Tests

The first area that this research seeks to explore is the broader views of teachers on these modern immigration issues. However, these must be looked at with a degree of caution. Whenever there is an online survey, the descriptive statistics cannot necessarily be fully generalizable. In a survey specifically dealing with issues of immigration, those who might be more interested in immigration or perhaps even more inclusive in their views may tend to respond. Nevertheless, given the fact that the demographics of the survey are similar to the national demographics of teachers, these descriptive statistics are not without value and should be considered. What is more generalizable with the descriptive statistics is the variance in responses between questions. For example, is there more support for the travel ban than there is for mass deportation or is there more

support for DACA students being allowed to stay than the pathway to citizenship for undocumented immigrants more broadly?

The central focus of the research will be on the inferential statistics, which are more generalizable than descriptive statistics (Nestor & Schutt, 2014). This study specifically examines the differences in beliefs on these modern immigration issues based on the areas of age, race and ethnicity, gender, region of the country, number of immigrant and undocumented immigrant friends, percentage of immigrant students in the classroom, political affiliation, and political ideology. For the area of age, number of immigrant and undocumented immigrant friends, political ideology, and percentage of immigrant students in the classroom, a Pearson's r correlation test was employed. For the areas of region of the country, race and ethnicity, and grade level, a one-way ANOVA analysis was used. For the area of gender and political affiliation, independent t-tests were used.

There was also an examination about the relationship between beliefs about modern immigration issues and the respondent's answers to the constructs of nationalism, beliefs about more abstract ideas of borders and migration, attitudes towards rights for immigrant students, and embrace of false immigration narratives. For all these areas, r correlation test were used to understand the relationship between the constructs. Finally, an OSL linear regression analysis was run to determine both the most significant factors based on demographic characteristics and then the most significant factors when the demographic factors and the other constructs were combined.

Procedures

The surveys were initially sent out to the entire database. Then, a reminder survey was sent out twice, and the survey officially closed two months later. After the survey was closed, the data was cleaned and the initial analysis began. The initial study did not examine the area of modern immigration issues as it was not central to that study. However, the questions were included in the original research in order to conduct future analysis on this crucial issue.

Findings

Descriptive Statistics

All the questions were based on a 7-point Likert type scale with 1 being a complete rejection of the idea and 7 being a complete acceptance of the idea. On the first item related to the mass deportation of most undocumented immigrants, the participants overall rejected the idea. There was a mean of 3.19 out of 7 (SD=1.83) with only 29% of teachers either strongly agreeing, agreeing, or somewhat agreeing with the idea, with 10.4% neither agreeing or disagreeing, and 60.6% strongly disagreeing, disagreeing, or somewhat disagreeing. The teachers also had more inclusive attitudes on the second area related to allowing undocumented children who were brought here to the country at a young age to stay in the country. Though this question did not directly specify Dreamers, this would be the group of individuals that would be most applicable to question. There was a mean of 5.5 out of 7 (SD=1.55) with 79.6% agreeing with the measure, 7.5% neutral, and only 12.9% disagreeing with the idea.

The third item examined was a question about Trump's travel ban with a mean of 3.23 out of 7. This was the area with the largest variance with a standard deviation of 2.19. This could possibly be attributed to this being the only issue directly addressing President Trump, and in some

ways more of a referendum on him directly. 59.4% disagreed with the policy, with 6.9% being neutral, and 33.7% in agreement with the policy. The most inclusive response was the fourth item proposing a pathway to citizenship for the majority of undocumented immigrants within the country with a mean of 5.83 (SD=1.24) with 89.2% agreeing with the items, 4.8% giving a neutral response, and 5.9% disagreeing.

In the area of refugees being allowed to stay in the country, there was a mean of 5.3 out of 7 (SD=1.45) with 76.5% in agreement, 11.5% neutral, and 12% in disagreement with the policy. The most exclusive response was on the item related to whether the number of immigrants should be increased or decreased. There was a mean of 4.06 out of 7 (7-high increase in immigration) near the neutral response with a standard deviation of 1.36. 28.5% thought immigration should be increased, 22.5% thought it should be decreased, and 48.8% thought it should remain the same, neither increasing nor decreasing (See Table 2 in the Appendix).

Inferential Statistics

These individual items were then combined into one scale. The factor analysis showed that the items had an eigenvalue of 3.92 that accounted for 65.34% of the variance. The items had a Cronbach alpha of .895. Several of the items were also re-coded so that 7 would be the most inclusive response on all items, leaving a scale of 6 (most exclusive towards immigration) to 42 (most inclusive towards immigration). When the construct was measured as a whole, teachers had a mean of 30.81 (SD=8.21), leaning significantly in a more inclusive direction towards issues of immigration. This construct was then used to measure the demographic differences between teachers.

Gender

In the area of gender, the t-test revealed that there was a statistically significant difference with female teachers holding more inclusive views with a mean of 31.23 (SD=7.85) compared to their male counterparts who had a mean of 29.91 (SD=8.87) (t=-4.24, p=<.01).[3]

Race and Ethnicity

In the area of race, the one-way ANOVA analysis showed that there was the statistical difference based on race and ethnicity (F=4.137, p=<.01) with Hispanic and Latino/Latina/Latinx respondents having the most inclusive views (M=31.53, SD=8.37) followed by White respondents (M=31.17, SD=8.02), African-Americans (M=30.97, SD=8.21), Asian-Americans (M=30.89, SD=7.69), and those of more than one race (M=28.94, SD=7.95). It should be noted that though there was a significant difference based on race and ethnicity, there was relatively low level of variance with an eta squared of only .006. For example, between Asian-Americans, African Americans, White Americans, and Latinos/Hispanics there was less than a one-point difference on the 6 to 42 scale. Native Americans were not included in the analysis given the low number of respondents who identified in this way.

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3. The option of transgender was also available in the survey though given the relatively few number of participants who identified in this way it was not included in the inferential analysis.

Age and Immigrant Friends/Students

In the area of age, the Pearson's r correlation test revealed that there was a significant difference based on age with younger respondents having more inclusive views, though it was at a relatively weak correlation level (r=-.087, p=<.01). This supports the research that shows that youth tend to have more inclusive views on immigration than the older population (Pew Research, 2018). The analysis also showed that more undocumented friends was associated with more inclusive attitudes (r=.128, p=<.01). This same trend was also seen with more immigrant friends overall, but with a less robust correlation (r=.082, p=<.01). There was also a statistically significant correlation between percentage of immigrant students in the class and inclusive attitudes, though this was not particularly robust (r=.033, p=.04).

Political Ideology and Affiliation

Perhaps not surprisingly, there was a strong and significant correlation between political ideology and attitudes towards modern immigration issues with liberal respondents having more inclusive views (r=.701, p=<.01). Similarly, there was a one-way ANOVA run between political affiliations. The analysis showed that there was a significant difference based on political affiliation (F=432.64, p=<.01). Those in the Green Party had the most inclusive beliefs (M=36.56, SD=5.66, n=61) followed by Democrats (M=35.28, SD=5.24, n=1707), Independents (M=30.70, SD=7.63, n=820), "other" (M=29.58, SD=9.16, n=192), Libertarians (M=26.58, SD=8.64, n=150), and Republicans (M=22.93, SD=6.69, n=863). When just examining the three largest groups: Republicans, Democrats, and independents, there were some notable differences based on individual items. For example, 47.4% percent of Republicans thought that immigration should be reduced compared to 9.6% of Democrats and 19.7% of independents. Conversely, only 9% of Republicans thought that immigration rates should be increased compared to 40.9% of Democrats and 27.1% of independents. Similarly, on the question regarding the majority of undocumented immigrants being deported, 62.9% of Republicans agreed with this idea compared to 10.4% of Democrats and 28.1% of Independents. This also confirms what is seen in the research on the divide on immigration between the political parties (Pew Research, 2018). However, there were some areas of surprising agreement such as on the issue of a significant portion of the immigrant population being given a pathway to citizenship with 82.4% of Republicans in agreement compared to 94.2% of Democrats, and 89.7% of independents. On the question related to Dreamers, 59.2% of Republicans agreed with the idea of children who came to the country illegally as children being allowed to stay compared to 93.5% of Democrats and 78.5% of Independents.

Region of Country

Participants' responses were also measured based on region of the country. A one-way ANOVA analysis showed that there was a significant difference based on this metric (F=37.33, p=<.01). The Northeast had the most inclusive responses (M=32.46, SD=7.70, N=811) followed by the West (M=32.30, SD=7.96, N=852), Midwest (M=29.93, SD=8.08, N=1107), and the South (M=29.31, SD=8.42, N=29.93). These numbers were somewhat different from a previous analysis which showed that in regard to rights for immigrant students, the West was the most inclusive followed by the Northeast, South, and Midwest (McCorkle, 2018a).

Relationship between Constructs

The construct of the broader, abstract attitudes towards immigration (such as migration being a human right, questions on rights of governments to control borders, etc.) was analyzed in relationship to the views on these modern immigration issues. There was a positive correlation between the two areas (r=.838, p=<.01). There was also a significant correlation between more inclusive attitudes towards educational rights for immigrant students and inclusive positions on modern immigration issues (r=.83, p=<.01). Conversely, there was a significant negative correlation between nationalism and more inclusive attitudes on modern immigration (r=-.623, p=<01). Additionally, there was a negative correlation (r=-.691, p=<.01) between more inclusive views on modern immigration issues and the embrace of false immigration narratives, such as immigrants committing higher crime rates, refugees being involved in terrorist activity, and the ease of undocumented immigrants obtaining citizenship.

There was then an OSL linear regression analysis employed to understand which factors were significant in regard to beliefs on modern immigration issues. The first linear regression solely looked at demographic areas. The areas of gender, race and ethnicity, age, region, political ideology, political affiliation, and number of immigrant friends were examined. The results showed that the most robust relationship was with political ideology followed by number of immigrant friends, and age. One of the most surprising results showed that when other factors were controlled for, more immigrant students in the class led to more exclusive views. (See Table 3).

The second linear regression (Table 4) also integrated the areas of nationalism, attitudes towards rights for immigrant students, embrace of false immigration narratives, the belief in the broader areas of borders and migration, and awareness of educational restrictions for immigrant students. These results showed that the demographic factors were not nearly as significant when considering these different constructs, with age and political ideology as the only factors that were still significant. The most robust factors in predicting views on modern immigration issues were the views on the more abstract ideas of immigration and beliefs about educational rights for immigrant students.

Discussion

These results on modern immigration issues have numerous implications. In regard to the broader demographic statistics, the results did show more inclusive views overall. These numbers should be seen with a certain measure of caution, however. First, the teachers who responded to the survey may have tended to have more inclusive views on immigration. Second, the results showed that the majority of teachers trended in a more liberal direction and were more likely to identify as Democrat. This is somewhat in line with research on the political alignment of teachers (Dunn, Sondell, & Baggett, 2019). Thus, the level of inclusivity in these areas of immigration are likely different than the general population overall. However, the broader statistics do show that many people, both Republicans and Democrats, have fairly inclusive views on areas like a pathway to citizenship and allowing Dreamers to stay in the country. A 2020 Pew Research study (Krogstad, 2020) found that 74% of the American public favored children who were brought to the country illegally as children being able to stay, including 54% of Republicans and 91% of Democrats. A 2020 Gallup Poll found that 77% of Americans believe immigration is good for the country (Younis, 2020). The same is true for attitudes in regard to refugees. Sana (2020) analyzed data from 1938 to 2019 and found some of the highest levels of support for refugees in the present

with over 30% more support for refugees in the period of 2017-2019 compared to the timeframe of 1939-1994.

This study does show that increasing immigration overall seems to have less support. It is as if there are more inclusive attitudes for those immigrants who are already here, but not as inclusive an attitude for those currently residing outside the country. This creates issues as it almost certainly guarantees that a system that makes illegal entry necessary will continue. While most teachers did not take a hard-line, nativist stance on immigration, many were also hesitant to take a more open and progressive stance which would lead to a re-envisioned idea of borders and migration as is alluded to in the critical border and migration framework.

In regard to the difference based on demographics, there were several intriguing results. Some of the results were not surprising such as the tendency of females, those who are more politically liberal, Democrats, and younger participants to have more inclusive views on immigration. These results reflect the larger trends in society. However, there were more surprising results when examining differences based on race and ethnicity. Though respondents who were Hispanic or of Latin American heritage did have the most inclusive responses, the second most inclusive were white respondents followed by African Americans and Asian Americans. This is intriguing when compared to national data, which shows that white Americans have more exclusive views on immigration (Pew Research, 2018). Several reasons may explain this dynamic. For one, white participants may have been more influenced by social desirability bias (Nederhof, 1985) and wanting to be perceived as more tolerant and thus perhaps gave more inclusive, pro-immigrant responses. However, part of the issue may also be that the areas of more xenophobic ideas may not have been examined as closely when it comes to other groups besides white Americans. It is tempting to create a dichotomy between whites and non-whites in views on issues such as immigration. However, as this research shows, there is often more complexity than the simplistic divide provides. Could it be possible that the more exclusive outlook towards immigration that have been central in the last few decades in American history have extended beyond those who would be more aligned as white Republicans? This does relate to the problems that have been explored about animosity between some in the black and brown communities, including how this has been driven for the purposes of white supremacy (Literte, 2011). Also, how does the good or model immigrant narratives (Campos Ramales 2019; Lachica Buenavista, 2018) that may have been relevant for some participants from Latin American and Asian origin relate to some of the more exclusive attitudes among some within these groups?

There also seems to be evidence from the results of the demographic differences that more interaction with immigrants, particularly immigrants that are undocumented or have DACA status, can have an effect on teachers' views on modern immigration issues. It should be noted that overall there were very few teachers that even said they had friends who were undocumented or had DACA status (McCorkle, 2018). 65% of teachers had no friends who were undocumented or with DACA status, and only 18.4% had more than two friends in this category. Perhaps this is part of the broader issue. Even among the sample which was significantly more liberal than the American population overall, there was still a real lack of personal connection with those most affected by these immigrant policies. This lack of connection was seen in the unawareness of teachers towards the difficulties of undocumented immigrants obtaining a pathway to citizenship (Rodriguez & McCorkle, 2020). It was also surprising that the number of immigrant students in one's classroom did not have a significant relationship with views on modern immigration issues. The ramifications of this needs to be explored more fully. The interactions and personal relationships can certainly have an influence on teachers' views, but maybe only if those issues that affect students' lives are

truly examined and critiqued by educators. Cherng (2017) found that teachers' familiarity with students is often weaker with minority students. It is certainly possible for an educator to have many immigrant students or many minority students in their classroom and not truly examine the lived experiences of the population that they are teaching (Rodriguez, Monreal, and Howard, 2020). That is why scholars such as Gloria Ladson-Billings (1998) stress the importance of ensuring that teachers who are going to work in minority schools not only learn how to teach, but become more culturally relevant teachers who allow other students' experiences and culture to influence them as educators.

In regard to the relationship between constructs, it should be noted that there was a significant relationship between beliefs on modern immigration issues and attitudes towards educational rights for immigrant students. The area of educational rights was examined in this research as a form of indirect questioning (Fisher, 1993) to understand teachers' views on immigrant students. Directly asking teachers about their attitudes towards immigrant students may not have given as accurate of results as teachers often want to appear more inclusive in their responses. This strong relationship between the two constructs shows the importance of teachers' views on these modern immigration issues. It cannot be proven by this research that belief in modern immigration issues affects the attitudes towards rights for immigrant students, but this is more probable than it is that the attitudes towards rights for immigrant students affect teachers' views on modern immigration issues. It logically follows that if teachers maintain more exclusive views on issues related to modern immigration, they will tend to also harbor more exclusive views towards rights for their students. This reality should give teacher educators a strong incentive to actually critique teachers' views on migration particularly through using a critical migration lens (McCorkle, 2020). Furthermore, if teachers have more inclusive attitudes towards their students, which all the research points to as a necessity for strong student outcomes, it may be necessary to not only probe the initial attitude but also to address underlying political beliefs that drive these attitudes (McCorkle, 2019).

It should also be noted that there was a strong correlation between levels of nationalism and more inclusive attitudes towards modern immigration issues. This is not necessarily a surprising trend. However, it is a special concern given the current political climate in the United States and globally with the strong stands of nationalism present (Rachman, 2018). As Ariely (2012) has highlighted, there is a strong correlation between nationalism and xenophobia. At some point love for one's country leads to a larger disdain and antagonism to those from the outside. This more vitriolic response may be seen in those who have placed the exaltation of country above basic human rights. It is important to note that in order to change perspectives on modern immigration issues, it might be necessary to actually address the issue of nationalism. This is not easy to do in the school setting as nationalism is often on full display, especially through areas like the ROTC that have a strong presence in many schools and push students towards the military (McGauley, 2014). While it is not possible to prove that nationalism causes these more restrictive attitudes towards modern immigration issues, it is likely one of the factors in these attitudes.

Finally, there was a strong negative correlation between the embrace of false immigration narratives and more inclusive attitudes on modern immigration issues. This seems to indicate that the misconceptions about immigration may be one of the reasons for more restrictive views. In this area, the false narrative that was most prominent was the belief that there was a viable pathway for those who are undocumented to obtain legal status. In fact, the mean was 4.69 out of 7 (7-embracing the false narrative) (SD=1.58). The levels of unawareness were lower on the other items such as the belief that immigrants commit crimes at higher rates, that refugees have been involved in several terrorist attacks, and that those who are undocumented qualify for federal aid in areas

like housing assistance and Medicaid. It does follow reasonably that if one truly believed the immigrants had much higher crime rates, that they simply were unwilling to become legal (presumably because they do not want to pay taxes), and that they are taking excessive federal benefits, that one might be less inclusive in their views on contemporary immigration issues (Rodriguez & McCorkle, 2020). However, some of the beliefs defy reason. For example, there was a significant negative correlation between those who thought it was fairly easy to obtain legal status if you are undocumented and those who were in favor of a pathway to citizenship for those who are undocumented. On one hand, they believe that it is fairly easy to obtain citizenship, but then do not want that to actually occur. It reminds me of my personal involvement in activism for Dreamers after the Trump administration sought to rescind DACA. While we were taking part in the activism, some anti-immigrant voices on social media would ask accusingly "why don't these young people just become legal?" even though that was the exact thing that we were working for with their activism. There was a disconnect between what people said they wanted (for immigrants to become "legal") and perhaps what they really wanted (more restrictive immigration policies). This also signifies something that has happened in the larger political debate on immigration. During the pre-Trump era, much of the discussion around immigration centered on the issue of legality. The argument would be something along of the lines of "I am pro-immigration, but I am just pro legal immigration." However, during the Trump years, especially under the leadership of anti-immigrant leaders like Steve Bannon and Stephen Miller, there was also an assault on legal immigration overall, whether that was the Trump administration seeking to limit the number of green cards, seeking to dramatically reduce the number of refugees allowed into the country, or blocking the ability for asylum seekers to even go through the process with the Remain in Mexico policy. These policies became even more draconian during the COVID-19 crisis particularly when the Trump administration used the crisis to implement anti-immigrant policies they already wanted (Garcia Bochenek, 2020).

Perhaps most relevant to this research is the need for teachers to move beyond only rejecting the more draconian immigration measures and actually supporting more pro human rights immigration policies overall. Though most of the teachers in the survey rejected policies like mass deportation and the false narratives about immigrant criminality and refugee involvement in terrorism, in the area of expanding immigration, they still tended to hold quite restrictive views that supported the norm when it came to immigration. This is where one of the greatest impacts of the Trump administration lies. Though some or perhaps even most Americans have rejected the most obvious and draconian immigrant measures such as denying people a chance to immigrate based on their religious background, separating children from their parents, and keeping children in horrific conditions, the overall norms about restrictive immigration have continued to be accepted. In fact, the real danger could be when the Trump administration leaves and the new Biden administration comes with a more palatable approach in regard to immigration and stops some of the most obviously draconian policies, people will be relieved and perhaps be even more content with the more restrictive policies that will have become the norm. For example, if the U.S. increases the number of refugees allowed into the country by 75% under the Biden administration, which would still be significantly lower than it was before the Trump administration, will that then be seen as a victory by much of the country even if those numbers are still low by international standards? In a similar vein, will the asylum policies that the Trump administration has sought to implement become the norm in American society? Will it be seen as too risky or overly generous if the next administration tries to revert back to the previous policies, which themselves were quite restrictive? This is the real danger that this research points to, and this is why it is essential for a

critical border and migration curriculum in the schools and perhaps more importantly in teacher education programs. It is essential that future educators are truly given a chance to critique the immigration policies that have become seen as normal far before the more draconian policies of the Trump administration. For example, it is almost taken for granted that the government should have the right to deny the majority of the people who are seeking refuge or asylum entrance. Where do we get this notion based on international human rights? As Tarrabok (2015) highlights, there is almost no ethical system that would blatantly claim that individuals deserve fewer human rights based on their country of origin. There is also almost no entertainment of the idea that migration is a basic human right. We have come to see it as an exclusive privilege that a nation has no obligation to extend. As Ngai (2014) and Ettinger (2009) have shown, this is actually a relatively new phenomenon in American history. For much of our history we have had more open borders. As Ngai (2014) highlights, at Ellis Island at times there were over 99% of immigrants who were allowed entrance into the country. Ettinger (2009) highlights that this also applied to the Mexican-American border where there were little to no restrictions for those coming from Latin America. It really was not until the 1920s in an age of xenophobia that is not too different from ours today that more widespread restrictions were put on immigration. Just like today, much of those restrictions were based on racial fears and antagonism. Most famously, the Chinese Exclusion Act, completely banned the group solely based on their ethnic background, which is not that different from what the Trump Administration sought to do with their travel ban or with the Remain in Mexico Policy (Migration Protection Protocol).

Conclusion

It is vital for educators and teacher educators to actually discuss these contemporary issues in immigration. Immigrant rights have become such a sensitive subject that it is very easy to not approach some of these more critical areas of modern immigration issues for many teachers. It is seen as becoming too political (Dunn et al., 2018). However, as the early 20th century philosopher Georges Counts (1932) states, it is not only within the rights of teachers to be political within their classrooms, but in many ways, it is part of their duty as educators. As McCorkle (2018b) highlights, if educators are not active in deconstructing xenophobia, it is very unlikely that these notions will ever be critiqued as students may not have sources or individuals that challenge their preconceived notions or exclusive perspectives.

Finally, teachers' views on these issues are crucial because in order for there to be large scale changes on immigration, it will be up to teachers to take a stance toward advocacy. Teachers are more likely to have contact with immigrants overall, and undocumented immigrants more specifically, than the general population. They are therefore more likely to respond and become active to what they see as injustices in the system, particularly those that affect their students (McCorkle, 2018a). It is therefore deeply important the teachers are informed of what is actually occurring in the system (Rodriguez, Monreal, & Howard, 2020) and that they base their beliefs on modern issues of immigration not in partisan allegiances, but in the values of human rights and democratic principles that reflect the views of educational leaders of the past whether they held more child centered perspectives like John Dewey (1925) or Maria Montessori (1912/2013) or more critical perspectives such as George Counts (1932/1978) or Paulo Freire (1970/1996). Educators need to begin to see xenophobia with the same level of disdain that we have seen or at least purportedly reject racism (McCorkle, 2018a). In order to do this, it will not be enough for teachers merely to stand against the most obvious and hateful policies, it will be necessary for them to take that next

step and help the U.S. reimagine a modern immigration system that is actually based on human rights and human liberty (Napolitano, 2013). We arrived at where we are today by a generation not thinking critically about the real implications of human rights and immigration. The only chance of perhaps escaping this cycle is for a generation of educators to make this a priority and realize that is not only their duty to educate the next generation and have them think critically, but it is also their obligation to actually allow their students to fully wrestle with the implication for human rights as it relates to asylum seekers, refugees, and immigrants in general.

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Appendix

Table 1: *Factor Analysis*

Communalities

	Initial	Extraction
Refugees who have suffered political repression in their own country should be allowed to stay in the United States.	1.000	.695
Do you think the number of immigrants to the United States today should be	1.000	.622
What are your feelings on policies which propose the deportation of the majority of the undocumented/illegal immigrants in the nation?	1.000	.781
What are your feelings on policies which seek to create a legal path to citizenship for a significant portion of the undocumented/illegal immigrant population?	1.000	.389
What are your feelings towards President Donald Trump's travel ban from individuals from certain nations?	1.000	.717
Undocumented/illegal immigrants who came to the country as children be allowed to stay.	1.000	.715

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis

Total Variance Explained

Component	Initial Eigenvalues			Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings		
	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1	3.920	65.335	65.335	3.920	65.335	65.335
2	.691	11.515	76.850			
3	.464	7.730	84.580			
4	.376	6.271	90.851			
5	.325	5.417	96.268			
6	.224	3.732	100.000			

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis

	Component 1
Refugees who have suffered political repression in their own country should be allowed to stay in the United States.	.834
Do you think the number of immigrants to the United States today should be	.789
What are your feelings on policies which propose the deportation of the majority of the undocumented/illegal immigrants in the nation?	-.884
What are your feelings on policies which seek to create a legal path to citizenship for a significant portion of the undocumented/illegal immigrant population?	.624
What are your feelings towards President Donald Trump's travel ban from individuals from certain nations?	-.847
Undocumented/illegal immigrants who came to the country as children be allowed to stay.	.846

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.[a]
a. 1 component extracted

Table 2: *Descriptive Statistics*

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
What are your feelings on policies which propose the deportation of the majority of the undocumented/illegal immigrants in the nation?	4525	3.19	1.834
What are your feelings on policies which seek to create a legal path to citizenship for a significant portion of the undocumented/illegal immigrant population?	4526	5.83	1.240
What are your feelings towards President Donald Trump's travel ban from individuals from certain nations?	4522	3.23	2.194
Undocumented/illegal immigrants who came to the country as children be allowed to stay.	4525	5.50	1.547
Do you think the number of immigrants to the United States today should be increased?	4588	4.06	1.356
Refugees who have suffered political repression in their own country should be allowed to stay in the United States.	4600	5.30	1.452

Table 3: *Linear Regression 1*

Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.710[a]	.505	.503	5.67929

ANOVAᵃ

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	117007.657	11	10637.060	329.787	.000ᵇ
	Residual	114825.303	3560	32.254		
	Total	231832.960	3571			

Coefficientsᵃ

		B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.
1	(Constant)	44.151	.750		58.906	.000
	White_nonHispanic	1.008	.497	.044	2.030	.042
	Hispanic_Latino	.194	.608	.006	.318	.750
	African_American	.743	.743	.015	1.000	.317
	Asian	-.022	1.078	.000	-.020	.984
	Female	.806	.213	.045	3.793	.000
	Age	-.027	.009	-.037	-3.111	.002
	Region	.061	.098	.008	.620	.536
	Number of Immigrant Friends	.342	.086	.060	4.003	.000
	Number of undocumented or DACA friends	.535	.100	.079	5.330	.000
	Political Ideology	-5.447	.094	-.689	-57.798	.000
	Percentage of immigrant students in class	-.196	.072	-.037	-2.733	.006

Table 4: *Linear Regression 2*

Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.913ᵃ	.834	.833	3.35055

ANOVAᵃ

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	144944.197	16	9059.012	806.954	.000ᵇ
	Residual	28783.913	2564	11.226		
	Total	173728.110	2580			

Coefficients[a]

		B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.
1	(Constant)	20.459	.901		22.705	.000
	White_nonHispanic	.621	.356	.027	1.747	.081
	Hispanic_Latino	-.652	.429	-.021	-1.519	.129
	African_American	.767	.518	.016	1.481	.139
	Asian	.835	.829	.009	1.007	.314
	Female	.173	.149	.009	1.161	.246
	Age	.017	.006	.023	2.713	.007
	Region	-.068	.068	-.009	-.990	.322
	Number of Immigrant Friends	.103	.059	.018	1.734	.083
	Number of undocumented or DACA friends	.039	.069	.006	.565	.572
	Political ideology	-.834	.094	-.106	-8.902	.000
	Percentage of immigrant students	-.029	.050	-.006	-.592	.554
	Belief in False Immigration Narratives	-.284	.020	-.157	-13.872	.000
	Borders and Migration Attitudes	.250	.010	.329	24.253	.000
	Attitudes towards rights for immigrants students	.327	.011	.382	29.540	.000
	Nationalism	-.071	.009	-.090	-8.342	.000
	Awareness of Educational Immigration Restrictions	.004	.019	.002	.233	.816