

**How Immigration Attitudes Shifted Among Racial Minorities in the Era of Trump
and its Inherent Impacts on the Democratic Coalition**

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Abstract

In light of President Trump's ability to secure a non-trivial vote share among racial minority groups despite holding strongly anti-immigrant stances, this research examines whether immigration stances and attitudes among African Americans, Asian Americans, and Latinos shifted in the Trump era. Through performing difference in proportion statistical tests and general observational methods from election survey results and utilizing interpretive analysis for congressional caucus press releases, this research attempts to answer if immigration attitudes shifted in a pro or anti-immigrant direction, or if such attitudes remained constant in the Trump era. Additionally, through the interpretive method described above, this research attempts to confirm if immigration has increased in salience among racial minority group's political elites. The results from the mixed-method approach largely suggest a pro-immigrant shift among African Americans and Latinos, with only partial evidence for a pro-immigrant shift among Asians. However, a notable disconnect is present with such shifts as elite opinion shifted much more sharply in the pro-immigrant direction compared to the public. Secondly, the results from the interpretive sections strongly confirm and reinforce common assumptions that the immigration issue has increased in salience in the era of Trump. Consequently, these results strongly suggest that the multiracial Democratic coalition will not face additional challenges in retaining current levels of minority support over the immigration issue.

Introduction

In the 2016 Presidential Election, Donald Trump achieved one of the greatest electoral college upsets in decades while running on an anti-immigrant, anti-globalist, anti-establishment platform. In Trump's 2016 campaign, calls for constructing a border wall between the United States and Mexico, as well as strongly anti-immigrant rhetoric suggesting undocumented immigrants are criminals, were dominant in both the Republican Primary and General Election in 2016. However, while Donald Trump's victory in 2016 was largely fueled by non-college whites, Trump garnered approximately 28% of support among Latinos (*How Groups Voted in 2016*, n.d.). Furthermore, Trump actually received increased support among Black voters compared to his party's previous nominees in Senator McCain and former Massachusetts governor Mitt Romney (Tyson & Maniam, 2016).

In the 2020 presidential election, where former Vice President Joe Biden was largely expected to win in an electoral landslide against President Trump, President Trump was shockingly able to grow his racial minority vote share amid anti-immigrant policies of family separation and anti-immigrant or xenophobic rhetoric targeting racial minorities. According to election exit polls, President Trump was able to receive approximately 32% Latino support, 34% Asian support, and over 12% African American support (*How Groups Voted in 2020*, n.d.). In Florida and Texas, two battleground states with strong Latino populations, President Trump was able to increase his vote share in Miami-Dade County by over 20% (*Live Election Results: 2020 Florida Results*, 2020) . And in many south Texas counties, such as Zapata County, Trump increased his overall Latino vote share by 20- 30% (*Live Election Results: 2020 Texas Results*, 2020). Trump won both competitive states easily, producing a very competitive presidential election and averting an assumed electoral landslide (*Live election results: The 2020 presidential*

race, 2020). Such vote shifts translated down-ballot resulting in additional Republican upsets in congressional races resulting in a significantly narrower Democratic House majority than expected.

In attempts to examine a direct pathway for how President Trump may have received such an increased minority vote share, this research addresses the question of how immigration attitudes shifted among African Americans, Asian Americans, and Latinos in the Trump era (2016-Present), compared to the pre-Trump era (2008-2015). In assessing the significance of potential immigration attitude shifts for each racial group, this research considers such shifts' inherent impacts on the Democratic coalition.¹ Furthermore, as a secondary or minor assessment, this research addresses whether or not the immigration issue has increased in salience among political elites in the Trump era. Through utilizing election year survey data of racial minorities and congressional caucus press releases for the respective racial groups, the results mostly suggest a pro-immigrant shift among African Americans and Latinos with only partial evidence that a pro-immigrant shift occurred among Asians in the Trump era. Furthermore, elite opinion for each racial minority group underwent a stronger pro-immigrant shift compared to their public counterparts, creating a disconnect between public and elite opinion for each racial group in the Trump era. The nuanced results on immigration attitude shifts, contrary to initial expectations, indicate that the Democratic coalition's strength of support will ultimately not be negatively impacted, even if clear benefits in growing the coalition cannot be appropriately attributed. Secondly, through the frequency of caucus press releases compared to the Pre-Trump era, the releases strongly indicate an increase in salience on the immigration issue among political elites

¹ When referring to the Democratic coalition, this research refers to the multiracial coalition that is commonly perceived as part of the Democratic base of support which include African Americans, Asian Americans, and Latinos.

Factors Influencing Immigration Attitudes: Literature Review

Before assessing attitude shifts among the racial groups, examining existing research to identify specific factors that shape each racial group's overall immigration sentiment is a primary focus of this section. Additionally, rather than focusing on competing philosophies for what shapes immigration attitudes among the racial groups of study, this section also attempts to highlight existing research on how such racial groups appear to adopt some anti-immigrant positions. Additionally, this section seeks to highlight existing research conducting similar methodologies, as many of the studies examined have also implemented election survey data and public opinion polls to arrive at such conclusions.

Concerning Latino's immigration stances, Callister, Galbraith, and Galbraith's research has been centered around specific factors that determine how pro-immigrant Latinos are in the era of the Trump administration. Callister, Galbraith, and Galbraith administered their own survey that controlled for the key factors of spoken language, age gender, and whether one knows an undocumented individual (Callister et al., 2019). After considering such factors, Callister et al. discovered that Latinos taking the survey in Spanish, the spoken language factor, and knowing an undocumented immigrant strongly correlated with the most pro-immigrant attitudes.

Moreover, regarding research on attitude variations within the Latino community, Stringer examined differences between Latino immigrants and non-immigrants. Stringer's examination suggested that US-born Latinos were more supportive of increased border security and less supportive of a pathway to citizenship than Latino immigrants within the United States. As a consequence of the trends above, Stringer suggests that nativity is a real factor in shaping immigration attitudes (Stringer, 2018). Furthermore, Stringer's research highlights that

assimilation to United States culture for immigrants was not indicative of adopting more anti-immigrant stances (Stringer, 2018).

Concerning Latino's support for President Trump, other issue areas may have influenced Latino's decisions to vote for the anti-immigrant presidential nominee in 2016. Galbraith and Callister suggest that other issues such as healthcare and the economy took precedence over immigration in guiding their decision to vote for Trump (Galbraith and Callister, 2020) even if some strong disagreement on immigration remained present. Additionally, Galbraith and Callister's survey found that 74% of Latinos voting for Trump in 2016 supported deporting all undocumented immigrants (Galbraith and Callister, 2020), further indicating that a portion of Latinos hold anti-immigrant stances. However, such anti-immigrant sentiment among Latinos must be further qualified as being truly representative. The authors also suggest that the Latino electorate in 2016 was much more conservative than the Latino population, consequently holding a disproportionate share of the Latino vote and increasing the likelihood in voting for Donald Trump in 2016 (Galbraith and Callister, 2020).

In summarizing guiding factors for Latinos, existing research has found that spoken language, immigration status, and relationship with an undocumented immigrant impact immigration attitudes. Furthermore, Spanish as the primary spoken language, having some personal relationship with an undocumented immigrant, and being an immigrant have all been associated with adopting more pro-immigrant stances within the Latino population. Furthermore, other issues outside of immigration and a conservative ideology are identified forces resulting in a significant minority of Latinos voting for President Trump. Thus, Latinos have not necessarily shifted toward holding more anti-immigrant attitudes and stances.

Concerning Asian American immigration stances, Tran and Warikoo suggest that the groups' immigration views largely preside in the pro-immigrant direction in being closely aligned with Latinos (Tran & Warikoo, 2021). Tran and Warikoo suggest the driving force behind such pro-immigrant views is through the increasing number in foreign born and undocumented Asian immigrants within the United States (Tran & Warikoo, 2021). Additionally, Tran and Warikoo posit that compared to other racial minority groups, Asian Americans are equally as likely to support work visa programs for immigrants, but are overall less supportive of providing pathways to citizenship for undocumented immigrants (Tran & Warikoo, 2021).

Furthermore, Samson demonstrates that social group perceptions among Asian-Americans influence the group's immigration sentiments. Samson suggests that an increased perception of commonality with Latinos results in an increase in support for undocumented immigrants' pathway to citizenship among Asian Americans (Samson, 2014). Meanwhile, Samson also highlights that perceived similarity with White people results in Asian Americans being increasingly likely to oppose such citizenship pathways (Samson, 2014), which suggests racial group interests are a key factor in influencing Asian Americans' immigration attitudes (Samson, 2014).

Comparing such factors with Latinos, with a pro-immigrant shift attributed to an increase in Asian immigrants in the United States, the factor of immigration or native born status is shared between both groups. However, a distinct factor shown to influence Asian immigration attitudes is group commonality.

Concerning African Americans' immigration attitudes and stances, Nteta not only examines the groups' stances in comparison to Whites' immigration views, but examines specific factors that explain why the group may hold less pro-immigrant stances. As of 2011,

African Americans were less supportive than Whites regarding policies or stances related to undocumented immigration (Nteta, 2014). Meanwhile, Nteta's research also suggests that perceived economic competition for jobs with such immigrants is one of the strongest factors resulting in some African Americans being less supportive of immigration than other minority groups (Nteta, 2014).

Furthermore, Greene's research suggests additional key factors in shaping African American's immigration attitudes as those who lived further away from the Houston metro area supported more anti-immigrant positions (Greene, 2021). Furthermore, Greene suggests educational levels shape African American sentiments toward immigration as those with higher education levels held more liberal or pro-immigration views (Greene, 2021). However, stark contrasts arise when assessing Black immigrants' attitudes on immigration. Greene posits that Black immigrants were four times more likely to agree that immigrants strengthen American culture and were twice as likely to support a pathway to citizenship for undocumented immigrants compared to Black non-immigrants (Greene, 2021).

Lastly, Carter and King-Meadows provide additional factors that have shaped immigration attitudes in the Trump era, and offer insight into how Black voters may have aligned themselves with Trump's 2016 immigration stances. Carter and King-Meadows' analysis of the 2016 Collaborative Multiracial Post-Election Survey suggests that linked fate and negative sentiment toward Latinos were the primary factors in shaping immigration attitudes (Carter & King-Meadows, 2019). Carter and King-Meadows suggested that linked fate among Black Americans did not reduce anti-immigrant sentiment and negative attitudes towards Latinos increased anti-immigrant sentiment (Carter & King-Meadows, 2019). Additionally, as a secondary factor, Carter and King-Meadows determine that African Americans holding

American or non-immigrant heritage rather than immigrant heritage were more likely to adopt anti-immigrant positions (Carter & King-Meadows, 2019). Additionally, regarding such attitudes and support for Trump, the authors highlight that while little evidence exists to demonstrate a significant share of African Americans voted for President Trump in 2016, the group's conflation of Latinos with immigrants and concerns for the group's own socioeconomic standing suggests how Trump's anti-immigration policies in 2016 may have resonated with members of the Black community (Carter and King-Meadows, 2019).

Examining shared factors among all three groups and forming potential hypotheses, the factor related to immigrant status or nativity is influential among African Americans, Asians, and Latinos. However, Black Americans diverge as the factor of socioeconomic security is also dominant in shaping immigration attitudes. However, regarding the identified factors shaping attitudes, the majority of the identified factors appear to be long standing trends that would have likely existed for multiple decades. While the increase in immigration among Asians could lead to an overall pro-immigrant shift and increase issue salience, other factors such as group commonality may feasibly neutralize such shifts. Additionally, fears of losing socioeconomic status or negative perceptions among African Americans are two factors that suggest a potential anti-immigrant shift may occur among the group in the Trump era. However, other factors such as geographic location and educational attainment may reasonably counter an anti-immigrant shift.

Assessing the factors above, existing research suggests potential for a significant increase in immigration's salience as an issue. With Asian Americans being the fastest-growing group of immigrants within the country, higher priority for the immigration issue is a significant possibility. Additionally, with Black Americans' concerns about socioeconomic security,

increased consideration for the immigration issue in a pro or anti-immigrant direction is a feasible expectation to hold. Regarding Latino factors, significant potential exists for immigration's salience to increase regardless if the group becomes more pro-immigrant. With identified factors impacting immigration attitudes such as immigration status or relationship with an undocumented immigrant, amid attacks on the DACA program and Trump's apparent prioritization of anti-immigrant policies previously mentioned, increased salience is ultimately a feasible expectation.

Hypotheses

Two hypotheses or expectations can be measured within this research question. The first expectation relates to overall immigration attitudes shifts with such shifts having an impact on the Democratic coalition.² Additionally, the second hypothesis relates to the salience and attitude shifts within congressional caucuses.³

H₁: Within the Trump era, immigration attitudes among Latinos, Asians, and African Americans witnessed no significant positive nor negative shift, negatively impacting the Democratic coalition.⁴

H₂: Within the Trump era, a significant increase in the salience of the immigration issue among political elites occurred, but no significant immigration attitude shifts occurred among Latino, Asian, and African American caucuses.

² In the project's initial stages, measuring for polarization through such shifts was a key component within the first hypothesis. However, cross-tabulation data measuring for partisanship, age, and other demographics prevented the measurement of this initial hypothesis.

³ In the project's initial stages, measuring polarization between pro-immigration and anti-immigration activist groups and caucuses was also a key component within the hypothesis. Lack of data among anti-immigrant groups prevented such a hypothesis from being measured.

⁴ The hypothesis operates under the well-established assumption that President Trump increased vote share among non-college White voters which are not an examined group within this research (Tyson & Maniam, 2016).

As seen above, I posit none of the racial groups examined in this research underwent any significant immigration attitude shift. With no pro-immigrant shift, the Democratic coalition will therefore face additional challenges in formulating a winning coalition. Regarding the second hypothesis, I posit a significant increase in the immigration issue's salience occurred. However, the immigration discussion among political elites underwent no significant attitude shift among the African American, Asian American, and Latino caucuses.

Research Design

The expectations related to a shift in immigration attitudes among the racial minority groups under examination are assessed largely through observational methods. To test this hypothesis, immigration polling data from 2008-2020 was compiled from the following election-year studies: the 2008, 2012, and 2016 American National Elections Study, 2008, 2012, 2016, and 2020 the Collaborative Multiracial Post-Election Survey, the 2008, 2012, and 2016 National Asian Americans Survey, and the 2020 Asian American Voters Survey. To further supplement various gaps within these election studies, polling data from 2008-2021 from Pew Research Center was utilized. Additionally, polling data was divided from 2008-2015, or the Pre-Trump era, to 2016-2021, the era where Trump was the Republican presidential nominee and subsequently President. Thus, in establishing variables for the project's design, the independent variable, or (x) is established as each racial minority group within these two political eras. Additionally, as we examine the change in political eras for racial minorities (x), the dependent variable, or (y), is established as the magnitude of pro-immigrant sentiment amongst each racial minority group. However, since a difference in proportions test is being conducted X_1 is defined as each racial minority group's attitude from 2008-2015. Additionally, X_2 is defined as each racial minority group's attitude from 2016-2021.⁵

⁵ Each Racial group is further denoted within the subscript of the Findings section (i.e. X_{1Asian})

Furthermore, the polling data collection process primarily involved gathering questions related to general attitudes toward immigrants and their effects on American society, border security, pathways to citizenship for undocumented immigrants, and questions related to deportation or allowing immigrants to remain in the United States. After compiling the specific question, the answer responses for each applicable racial group, and the sample size of the respective racial group, two-sample proportion z -tests were conducted in order to test for a statistically distinguishable difference⁶ in potential immigration attitude shifts from 2008-2016 for the individual racial groups. However, the difference in proportion z -test was only utilized involving questions nearly replicated within the same survey that spanned the two defined eras above. Otherwise, after compiling responses for each minority group, only general observational methods examining the magnitudes of such shifts across the eras without being able to assess statistical significance or distinguishable difference, were utilized.

In measuring the salience of immigration stances or attitudes hypotheses, interpretive methods were implemented. The interpretive approach involved examining available immigration-related press releases of the Congressional Hispanic Caucus, Congressional Asian Pacific American Caucus, Congressional Black Caucus.⁷ While such data was wholly qualitative, codes were assigned to each press release regarding their pro-immigrant magnitude.

Concerning the interpretive section's coding scheme, a code of "1" was assigned to a press release if the language was strongly pro-immigrant where the given Caucus strongly complimented or defended immigrants, framed immigration as a human rights issue, or

⁶ Only a notable difference can be deterred from the results of the two-proportion z -test rather than formal statistical significance.

⁷ The Congressional Hispanic Conference and Freedom Caucus press releases were also assessed. However, the results from the two Republican caucuses were omitted from the research as the available press releases only covered one of the defined political eras. Without releases covering both eras, assessment for immigration attitude shifts and salience could not be conducted.

established the most pro-immigrant stance within the release. Moreover, statements framing immigrant rights as human rights were very likely to receive the strongly pro-immigrant code. However, a code of “.5” was assigned to a press release if the release endorses pro-immigrant sentiments or policies, yet was less strongly pronounced than documents receiving a code of “1.” Such sentiments largely differentiated themselves from the strongly pro-immigrant category by only highlighting how immigration may benefit society economically, or simply established modest support for family-based immigration or pathways to citizenship.

Meanwhile, a code of “0” was assigned to documents that were either informational and objective on immigration issues, or held significant elements of both pro and anti-immigrant sentiments. Many documents calling for bipartisan or comprehensive immigration reform without clearly establishing details of such reform received the neutral rating, and statements calling for a “tough but fair immigration system” were also likely to receive the neutral rating.

Concerning anti-immigrant ratings, a code of “-.5” was assigned if a caucus’ press release adopted attitudes or policies that oppose immigrants, especially undocumented immigrants, or emphasize enhancing border security as a key priority of immigration reform. Lastly, a code of “-1” was assigned if a caucus’ press release engaged in offensive or dehumanizing language against immigrants or endorsed policies that were also opposed to legal immigration.

Code	Guidelines
1 (Strongly Pro-Immigrant)	Strongly defends/endorses most pro-immigrant stance (i.e. human rights framing)
.5 (Pro-Immigrant)	Less pronounced but clear favorability toward immigrants (i.e. opposes family separation, identifies economic benefits)
0 (Neutral)	Informational/Objective, No clear immigration stance, significant pro and anti-immigrant sentiments (i.e. Comprehensive/Bipartisan Immigration Reform)

-.5 (Anti-Immigrant)	Clear skepticism or opposition toward immigration related issues (i.e. Must Learn English, Spillover Violence)
-1 (Strongly Anti-Immigrant)	Dehumanizing/offensive language adopts most anti-immigrant stances (i.e. ending legal immigration, border wall)

Table One: Interpretive Immigration Attitudes Guidelines

After assigning codes for each press release and recording key words and phrases that establish their immigrant position, further analysis was conducted involving the frequency of such releases as well as an attitude shift between the two eras, X_1 and X_2 . Such frequency was measured by the total number of statements released per year well as overall number of press releases within the defined era. Regarding attitude shifts between the two eras for the respective caucuses, a simple mean computation was conducted, allowing for a two-sample t -test⁸ to be conducted to test for significance between the two eras.

Regarding the political party platforms from these two eras, purely interpretive analysis was conducted and the only feasible approach. From these two eras, only the 2008, 2012, 2016, and 2020 official Democratic Party platforms adopted by the Democratic National Committee and 2008, 2012, and 2016⁹ official Republican Party platforms adopted by the Republican National Committee are available for analysis. Selected policies and quotes were utilized and analyzed under the same framework as the caucus' press releases, allowing for a historical analysis of such attitudes rather than seeking out statistical significance. Analyzing the party platforms, while not specifically written by any of the three racial minority groups above, establish vital context not necessarily provided in the literature review section as it further

⁸ The two sample t -test was selected over the two sample z -test to formally establish statistical significance.

⁹ In 2020, the Republican Party re-adopted the 2016 Republican Party platform, therefore not publishing a new platform for the 2020 presidential election (Prokop). For coding purposes, the 2016 platform's immigration attitude code will also apply for 2020.

conveys the range of immigration stances within the political mainstream from the pre-Trump and Trump eras.

Party Platforms

Democratic Party

The Democratic Party's platforms indicate a shift from an overall neutral stance in the Pre-Trump era (2008, 2012), to a strongly pro immigrant stance in the Trump eras (2016, 2020). In the Pre-Trump era, Democrats received a code of "0" for both platforms not by being informational or taking no stance on immigration, but rather by containing significant pro-immigrant and anti-immigrant sentiments on issues such as border security and pathways to citizenship. However, in 2016 and 2020, the Democratic Party witnessed a significant shift in championing DACA protections and including statements that suggest immigrants' essential nature to the domestic economy, receiving the strongly pro-immigrant code of "1."

In 2008,¹⁰ the Democratic Party platform contained both pro-immigrant stances and unfavorable stances toward immigrants, resulting in an overall neutral party platform on the immigration issue. Democrats called for immigration reform that would create a tough yet fair immigration system. Furthermore, Democrats also called for an increase in border security, which is inherently an unfavorable stance toward immigrants as described above. However, Democrats establish a clear acknowledgement of contributions immigrants have made for the

¹⁰ For access to 2008 Democratic Party Platform:
<https://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/documents/2008-democratic-party-platform>

United States, a clearly pro-immigrant sentiment. Regarding undocumented immigrants' pathway to citizenship, Democrats adopted the following stance seen in the quote below.

"We support a system that requires undocumented immigrants who are in good standing to pay a fine, pay taxes, learn English, and go to the back of the line for the opportunity to become citizens. They are our neighbors, and we can help them become full tax-paying, law-abiding, productive members of society." - 2008 Democratic Party Platform

One can clearly discern the notable contingencies present in the Democratic Party's ideal of obtaining citizenship in paying back taxes and learning English. Moreover, the learning English provision is ultimately considered an anti-immigrant sentiment. However, the overarching stance still provides pathways to citizenship for undocumented immigrants. Additionally, the second half of the statement holds clearly pro-immigrant undertones in calling immigrants "neighbors," and Democrats seek to assist immigrants in being a model citizen rather than damage their well-being. Such a statement is a clear reflection of the difficulties in determining the overall sentiment of the party's platform, ultimately assigning the most appropriate classification in being neutral toward immigration.

Regarding the 2012 party platform,¹¹ the Democratic platform contained an even greater mix of pro-immigrant and anti-immigrant statements, also resulting in an overall classification of neutral. Within the platform, Democrats highlight the low number of border crossings and border security strength during President Obama's first term, an overall anti-immigrant sentiment. Furthermore, Democrats continued to endorse the English learning and paying back taxes requirement for undocumented immigrants. However, Democrats also endorsed the Dream Act

¹¹ For access to 2012 Democratic Party Platform:
<https://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/documents/2012-democratic-party-platform>

and established strong opposition against family separation during border crossings, two major examples of a pro-immigrant sentiment. Overall, the quote below serves as an accurate reflection of the 2012 platform's neutral immigration stance.

"President Obama and the Democratic Party stand for comprehensive immigration reform that intelligently prioritizes our country's security and economic needs," - 2012 Democratic Party Platform

The statement above encapsulates both anti-immigrant and pro-immigrant sentiments in focusing on the economy and border security. In previously acknowledging contributions immigrants have made, prioritizing satisfying economic needs is a pro-immigrant sentiment as immigrants provide benefits to the American economy. However, as seen with prioritizing the country's security a rather anti-immigrant sentiment is adopted as some forms or levels of immigration are feared with such a statement.

Regarding the 2016 platform,¹² the Democratic Party's platform underwent a significant shift in the pro-immigrant direction, endorsing strongly-pro immigrant stances. Democrats continued to acknowledge how valuable immigrants are within American society. Furthermore, Democrats strongly supported the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals policy (DACA), a pro-immigrant program protecting some undocumented immigrant children. Lastly, the 2016 platform offered no significant discussion of enhancing border security or decreasing undocumented immigration that was present in the previous platform. After further examination of the platform, Democrats seem to have centered an immigration response drawing clear contrasts of opposition to Trump's border wall and other anti-immigration policies. The

¹² For access to 2016 Democratic Party Platform:
<https://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/documents/2016-democratic-party-platform>

statement below thoroughly encapsulates the Democratic Party's attitude towards immigrants in 2016.

"We are proud of our heritage as a nation of immigrants. We know that today's immigrants are tomorrow's teachers, doctors, lawyers, government leaders, soldiers, entrepreneurs, activists, PTA members, and pillars of our communities." - 2016 Democratic Party Platform

The statement above relates to general immigration attitudes in which the Democrats establish strong support for immigrants. Democrats are calling immigrants pillars of communities and highlight how immigrants will hold future prestigious professions such as being a doctor or lawyer, also a strongly pro-immigrant sentiment.

Lastly, in 2020,¹³ the Democratic Party reaffirmed their strongly pro-immigrant position centered around denouncing and overturning Trump immigration policies and through promoting immigrant rights. A key policy repeal Democrats sought was to end President Trump's national emergency declaration to construct the border wall between the United States and Mexico. Furthermore, when discussing pathways to citizenship for undocumented immigrants, the Democratic Party does not include any endorsement of english learning or back tax requirements for undocumented immigrants. Additionally, Democrats endorse labor protections for immigrants from employer exploitation and providing deferred action programs for undocumented immigrants who report such abuses. Moreover, Democrats oppose immigrant detention within the platform and seek to create community based solutions, which is also a strongly pro-immigrant stance. Within the 2020 platform, Democrats continued to establish

¹³ For access to 2020 Democratic Party Platform:
<https://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/documents/2020-democratic-party-platform>

general attitudes about immigration that were strongly pro-immigrant like the statement above in 2016, only reinforcing a clear shift in immigration views within the Democratic Party.

Republican Party

The Republican Party's platforms underwent a smaller attitude shift compared to the Democratic Party and witnessed such a shift in the Pre-Trump Era. In 2008, the Republican Party's platform on immigration was anti-immigrant in nature, receiving a code of "-.5" largely through emphasizing border security over advancements of immigrant rights. Additionally, the 2012 Republican Party platform upon re-examination also received a code of "-.5" but posited more strongly anti-immigrant sentiments within the platform. However, the 2016 and inherent 2020 platforms adopted strongly anti-immigrant sentiments and endorsed President Trump's border wall proposal.

Regarding the 2008 platform,¹⁴ the Republican Party platform adopted anti-immigrant stances in emphasizing the need for rule of law with border security. Regarding border security, Republicans largely adopted the stance of prohibiting illegal workers, reducing undocumented immigration, and framing border security as a national security issue.

"Border security is essential to national security. In an age of terrorism, drug cartels, and criminal gangs, allowing millions of unidentified persons to enter and remain in this country poses grave risks to the sovereignty of the United States and the security of its people.."- Republican Party Platform 2008.

¹⁴ For access to 2008 Republican Party Platform:
<https://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/documents/2008-republican-party-platform>

As seen with the quote above, Republicans endorse the notion that undocumented individuals threaten the country's sovereignty, a sentiment that opposes undocumented immigrants. Furthermore, such a statement demonstrates Republican hesitancy or fear of undocumented immigrants, strongly contributing to an anti-immigrant position.

Furthermore, the 2008 platform adopted anti-immigrant principles by placing major contingencies on immigrant communities even though Republicans may seek to embrace immigrants. Such major contingencies included a strong encouragement to learn the unifying language of English and the necessity to adhere to America's founding principles.

"In our multi-ethnic nation, everyone — immigrants and native-born alike — must embrace our core values of liberty, equality, meritocracy, and respect for human dignity and the rights of women." - 2008 Republican Party Platform.

Forcing immigrants to adhere to specific American values even if such values are objectively positive, implies that Republicans are calling for conformity for immigrants. Such conformity requirements are ultimately an anti-immigrant stance rather than a pro-immigrant stance as Republicans view this as a necessity for immigrants to be in this country rather than simply just allowing immigrants to witness such values in their new country.

Additionally, within the 2008 Republican Party Platform's discussion of immigration, the Republican Party encourages immigrants to learn English which is also an anti-immigrant sentiment. Within the platform Republicans discuss how English is unifying and formally endorse support for the language while discussing immigration. The Republican Party may not endorse an English language learning requirement for immigrants, and only encourage learning English because of its unifying force. However, formally encouraging learning English is not

necessarily representative of a pro-immigrant sentiment. A neutral or pro-immigrant stance would entail creating English second language programs or other pathways for immigrants to be able to learn English. Simply proclaiming that immigrants should learn the language because of its unifying force in the United States prioritizes the country's interest over the immigrant's interest.

Moreover, the 2012 Republican Party platform¹⁵ remained anti-immigrant through criticizing President Obama's immigration policy. While President Obama's immigration policy was not pro-immigrant in nature, the Republican platform criticized the President's actions not for being more pro-immigrant, but for lacking important restrictions on immigrants.

"The current Administration's approach to immigration has undermined the rule of law at every turn. It has lessened work-site enforcement—and even allows the illegal aliens it does uncover to walk down the street to the next employer—and challenged legitimate State efforts to keep communities safe." - 2012 Republican Party Platform.

As seen above, Republicans emphasize concerns with keeping communities safe and the rule of law as immigration under the Obama administration has undermined those two principles. Additionally, the term "illegal alien" is utilized which is degrading diction toward immigrants. While this term is not used throughout the document or in alignment with other strongly anti-immigrant principles, the quote above is a clear demonstration of an anti-immigrant sentiment adopted by Republicans. One may note within the immigration discussion that Republicans demonstrate strong support for legal immigration. However, Republicans within the same paragraph demonstrate equally strong opposition for illegal immigration, which makes

¹⁵ For access to 2012 Republican Party Platform:
<https://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/documents/2012-republican-party-platform>

such a sentiment neutral. With these elements described above, the 2012 platform is still considered anti-immigrant.

Regarding the 2016 and inherent 2020 platforms,¹⁶ the Republican Party ultimately shifted their stances into the strongly anti-immigrant category. While not yet supporting immigration moratoriums, arguably the most extreme anti-immigrant stance one can adopt, and professing support for legal immigrants, the 2016 platform shifted into the strongly anti-immigrant category. Its endorsement of the border wall and through its underlying sentiments that clearly demonize undocumented immigrants in relation to the American citizen are sufficient to categorize the platform as strongly anti-immigrant.

*“We stand with the victims of his policies, especially the families of murdered innocents. Illegal immigration endangers everyone, exploits the taxpayers, and insults all who aspire to enter America legally. We oppose any form of amnesty for those who, by breaking the law, have disadvantaged those who have obeyed.” -
2016 Republican Party Platform*

The quote above demonstrates very strong opposition to undocumented immigration by adopting the lens of breaking the law. Additionally, Republicans sympathize and align themselves with the victims of potential crimes or wrongdoing of undocumented immigrants, which only suggests how undocumented immigration has created horrendous crime within the United States. Lastly the strong language of “endangering everyone” and “exploiting the taxpayers” further depict a strongly anti-immigrant sentiment. The former phrase indicates Republicans' belief that undocumented immigrants are a physical danger to US citizens. Additionally, the latter phrase suggests that undocumented immigrants pose extremely negative

¹⁶ For access to the 2016/2020 Republican Party Platform:
<https://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/documents/2016-republican-party-platform>

economic impacts on the country, as they place extreme burdens on the country's taxpayers. Combined with the adoption of building a wall to secure the United States border completely, such stances ultimately result in a strongly anti-immigrant classification, even if the platform is not wholly reflective of that classification.

Interpretive Findings

Congressional Hispanic Caucus

Within the pre-Trump era, through assessing immigration stances, diction, and tone, the Congressional Hispanic Caucus¹⁷ held an overall baseline pro-immigrant stance. Fifty-three ($n_{Latino}=53$) immigration related press releases were identified ranging from 2012-2015, with the caucus receiving a mean interpretive score of .538 ($\bar{x}_{Latino} = .538$). The average press release score is in strong alignment with the 2012 Democratic Party platform discussed above through its genuine support for immigration. Yet, it contains many neutral elements and lacks the pronounced defense or support for immigrants. After re-examination¹⁸ of press releases from the era, no anti-immigrant releases were published, yet nine of the fifty three received a neutral score primarily through failing to indicate a clear immigration stance such as calling for bipartisan immigration reform. From criticizing Republican officials' immigration stances such as Steve King, Mitt Romney, and Donald Trump, to supporting DACA, to denouncing Arizona's SB 1070 law and court rulings, the caucus did not engage in a dominant discussion of one specific immigration area issue compared to the Congressional Asian Pacific American Caucus. The

¹⁷ For access to Congressional Hispanic Caucus Press Releases:
<https://chc.house.gov/media-center/press-releases>

¹⁸ The Congressional Hispanic Caucus' 28 November 2012 release titled "One Nation" initially received an anti-immigrant score of -.5 for adopting English learning requirements. However, significant pro-immigrant stances were adopted as the release progressed, resulting in a neutral rating.

selected quote below is an accurate encapsulation of the Congressional Hispanic Caucus' immigration attitudes before Trump's candidacy.

“Governor Brewer is simply making up rules for the sake of politics and not even considering what makes good economic policy or what is fair and just for productive, dedicated young immigrants. These young people, who after years of struggle finally have been granted an opportunity to fully contribute to their adopted country, have not violated any law of the United States.” - Congressional Hispanic Caucus, 16 August 2012.

With the statement above, both criticism of anti-immigrant legislation and support for immigrants are present. Following the passage of Arizona's SB 1070, the quote's context surrounds Arizona Governor Brewer's decision to cut state benefits for “DREAMers,” a largely baseline anti-immigrant stance. The Congressional Hispanic Caucus displays clear opposition to such an order, highlighting its political and immoral nature. Additionally, defense or support of immigrants is present by highlighting how these immigrants have abided by the country's laws and suggesting how they can contribute to the United States. Such a statement, although mild in tone and diction, preventing itself from being a strongly pro-immigrant sentiment in the research, still demonstrates baseline support for immigrants when anti-immigrant legislation is enacted.

“Richwine's assertions show a man with a flawed understanding of human nature and of immigration. Those who come to America to seek freedom and opportunity arrive with the intent to work hard to build a new life. In fact, immigrants are twice as likely to start a small business as native-born Americans and countless studies have shown the benefits of immigration on the economy.” - Congressional Hispanic Caucus, 08 May 2013.

The statement above is a response to the Heritage Foundation’s anti-immigrant claims that Latino undocumented immigrants have low intelligence levels. Like the previous quote discussed above, the caucus is condemning anti-immigrant sentiment from conservative officials, yet shifts focus from anti-immigrant policies enacted to public remarks or stances that are harmful to immigrant communities. With the quote, a notable yet mild condemnation of such anti-immigrant statements is displayed through calling such remarks a “flawed understanding.” Additionally, pro-immigrant remarks in wanting freedom and opportunity as well as how immigrants are a boon to the country’s economy are emphasized by the caucus, reaffirming the caucus’ tendency to not only denounce anti-immigrant sentiment but hold modest pro-immigrant stances in the pre-Trump era.

Within the Trump era, the Congressional Hispanic Caucus underwent a very significant pro-immigrant shift from the previous era while also drastically increasing their frequency of immigration related releases. Within the era, 130 ($n_{2Latino}=130$) “major”¹⁹ immigration related releases were identified from the following years: 2016, 2018, 2020, and 2021²⁰. Out of the selected years, the caucus released approximately two and one-half times the amount of releases as identified in the pre-Trump era, a clear indication of a salience and frequency increase. Out of the selected Trump era years, the caucus received a mean interpretive score of .712 ($\bar{x}_{2Latino} = .712$), a value much more closely aligned with the strongly pro-immigrant category compared to the pre-Trump era. Conducting the two-sample *t*-test produces the following results below in determining statistical significance.

$$H_0: \bar{x}_{2Latino} - \bar{x}_{1Latino} = 0$$

¹⁹ Due to mass volume and frequency of minor releases such as isolated instances with ICE or administrative critiques of government immigration agencies, releases of this nature were omitted from the data collection and data analysis processes of the research.

²⁰ Due to the mass volume of releases per year in the Trump era, only election year press releases were examined. 2021 was preserved as the data was already collected before determining the volume of such releases.

$$H_a: \bar{x}_{2,Latino} - \bar{x}_{1,Latino} > 0$$

$$df = 106.117$$

$$t = -3.359$$

$$p = 5.437E-4$$

$$p < .05$$

Such results are quite conclusive in determining a pro-immigrant shift for the caucus in the Trump era. Such values confirm that the null hypothesis arguing for no shift can be rejected, and statistical significance can be discerned from any common alpha-value threshold.

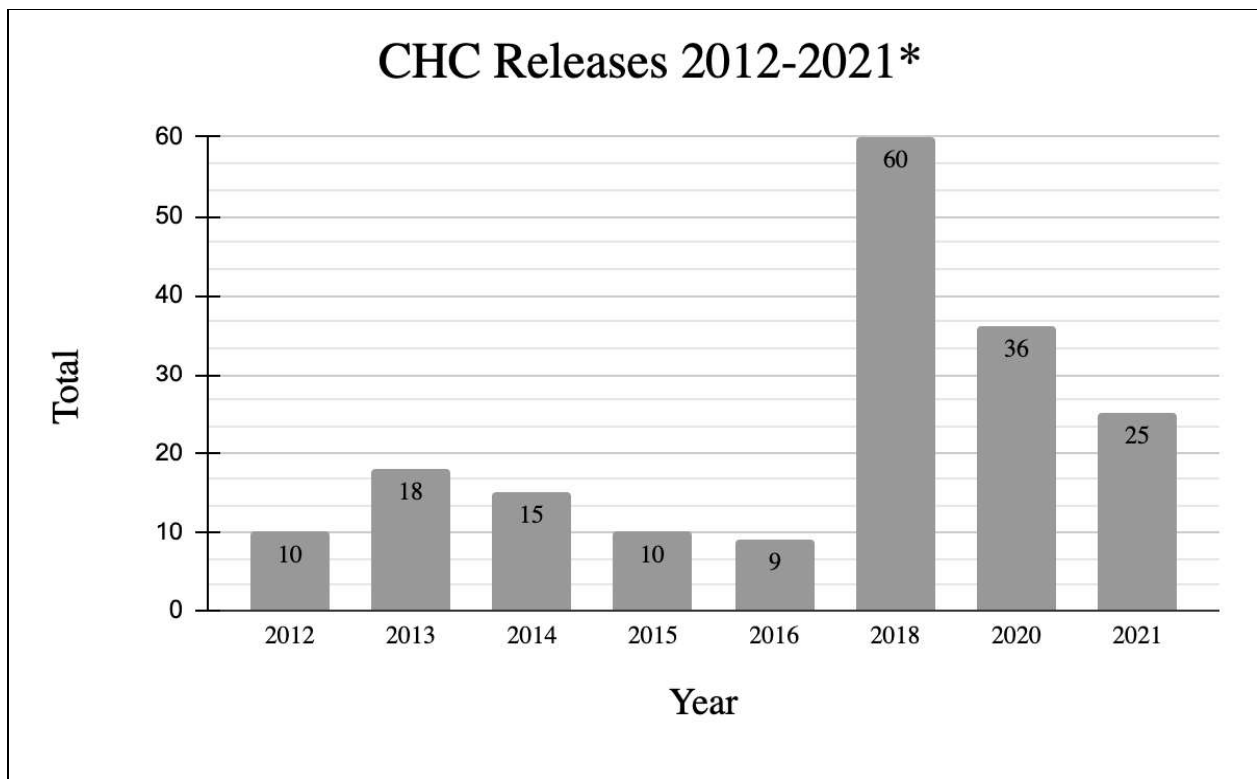


Figure One: Congressional Hispanic Caucus Press Releases by Year²¹

²¹ Asterisk in Figure One refers to selected years assessed in the Trump era, since the years of 2017 and 2019 were omitted.

Further assessing frequency or saliency the figure above demonstrates a stark increase in the Trump era, especially once Trump assumed office. Both years measured where Trump was in office as President, there was at least double the amount of immigration releases compared to the pre-Trump era's maximum year for immigration releases. However, a key observation worth noting is the total of immigration releases published in 2021 are in much greater alignment with Trump's presidency years than with the pre-Trump era. The volume of releases in 2021 demonstrates that such salience and frequency may have increasingly solidified even if the Trump era of politics has already concluded.

While immigration issues may have ranged from family separation to the public charge rule, a dominant strongly pro-immigrant trend for the Congressional Hispanic Caucus in 2020 and 2021 were the releases centered around immigration and the COVID-19 pandemic. Out of the sixty-one identified releases between 2020 and 2021, twenty-six were identified to at least briefly mention immigration in the context of COVID-19. The selected quote below will serve as a thorough representation of the strongly pro-immigrant sentiment the caucus adopted in the pandemic context.

“Finally, the COVID-19 pandemic has shown us that immigrants make up a significant portion of essential frontline workers in industries like healthcare and agriculture. But, despite how much we depend on immigrant workers, some unscrupulous employers seek to exploit them, making them work extreme hours in difficult and dangerous conditions. That is why the inclusion of my bill, the POWER Act, which protects immigrants who report unfair labor practices, is key to ensuring immigrants are treated with dignity and respect in the workplace.” - Congressional Hispanic Caucus, Judy Chu (CAPAC), 18 February 2021.

The selected quote demonstrates a strongly pro-immigrant sentiment very quickly by highlighting how immigrants served as essential frontline workers in multiple industries during the COVID-19 pandemic. Highlighting how immigrants are essential and how American society depends upon immigrants rather than just benefiting from immigrants is a clear indication of a strongly pro-immigrant sentiment rather than a generic pro-immigrant stance. Additionally, defense of immigrants rights is present with the statement shifting focus over to the POWER act where the caucus mentions immigrants facing poor working conditions and exploitation. The caucus implies support for such legislation in the selected statement, which also echoes such exploitation concerns highlighted in the strongly-pro immigrant 2020 Democratic Party platform.

Additionally, a recurring theme developed in the Trump era was the caucus' coverage of immigrant abuses, especially as a consequence of Trump era immigration policies. Within the era, the immigration system was often described as "cruel" or "unjust" while also highlighting the need for a humane immigration system. Many of the caucus' press releases implemented graphic descriptions of the horrors that immigrant children and families underwent while going through the country's immigration process, a strong contributor to a strongly pro-immigrant sentiment in the era.

"Today, we mark a horrific anniversary – one year of the Remain in Mexico policy, which has had a devastating impact on families and children at our border. I have seen this humanitarian crisis with my own eyes, when our Hispanic Caucus and Democratic colleagues crossed the border to visit families in Matamoros earlier this month. We were met with the sight of thousands of asylum seekers living in squalid tent camps, living with no running water and inadequate access to food, medical care, and basic sanitation."-
Congressional Hispanic Caucus, 29 January 2020.

The quote above serves as a strong reflection of how the caucus denounced anti-immigrant policies. In beginning the statement, the caucus deems Trump's Remain in Mexico policy, an anti-immigrant policy, as "horrific" and "devastating." Furthermore, the description of such asylum seekers being deprived of human rights such as water, food, and medical care, strongly convey immigrant abuse. By exposing such conditions, the caucus strongly denounced these immigrant abuses and contrasted themselves from the Trump administration. The human rights abuse framing clearly displayed only conveys a strongly pro-immigrant sentiment as the immigration issue has shifted beyond just economic or moral concerns.

Congressional Asian Pacific American Caucus

The Congressional Asian Pacific American Caucus' press releases²² from the pre-Trump era to Trump era underwent a significant pro-immigrant shift and drastically increased in salience, suggesting the caucus will give greater priority to the immigration issue. In the pre-Trump era, the caucus largely focused on family separation and family unification as part of larger comprehensive immigration reform. Meanwhile, largely in strong opposition to President Trump's immigration policies, the Trump era witnessed a prevalence of Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals releases where the caucus staunchly defended DREAMers' rights.

Regarding overall immigration sentiment in the pre-Trump era, the Asian Pacific American Caucus' press releases received a pro-immigrant rating. Out of forty-five ($n_{Asian}=45$) identified immigration related press releases ranging from 2011-2015, the caucus' mean press release received an interpretive score of .6 ($\bar{x}_{Asian} = .6$), closer to a baseline pro-immigrant stance. No press releases in the era received an anti-immigrant rating, yet five of the forty-five

²² For access to Congressional Asian Pacific American Caucus' press releases:
<https://capac-chu.house.gov/press-releases>

identified releases received a neutral rating, largely through not identifying a clear immigration stance within the statement.

Concerning specific themes, a recurring focus of the press releases involved achieving comprehensive immigration reform that reunited families. Approximately twenty-seven of the forty-five, or sixty-percent of identified documents included at least a brief mention of family separation or promoting family unity, indicating this immigration's theme dominance in pre-Trump immigration era discussions. Furthermore, throughout the releases, the caucus highlighted how the current immigration system's features such as visa backlogs would separate families when attempting to immigrate to the United States. The selected quote below serves as an accurate reflection of the group's support for family reunification.

"I commend the Senators for addressing family reunification and the reduction of visa backlog that keeps families separated, as well as supporting the Development, Relief, and Education for Alien Minors (DREAM) Act, legislation that will benefit hard-working and brilliant undocumented students. The current family-based immigration system has not been updated in over two decades—keeping spouses, children and their parents separated for years and often decades. There are currently over 4.55 million people in the family immigration backlog waiting unconscionable periods of time to reunite with their family members. Our families deserve a comprehensive fix to our broken immigration system that tackles bureaucratic delays, inefficiencies, and outdated policy that keep loved ones apart."- Congressional Asian Pacific American Caucus, Mike Honda, 28 January 2013.

The quote above from Congressman Mike Honda highlights the caucus' urgency and support for family reunification. Honda highlights the great lengths of time families wait to be reunited due to the current immigration system and mentions how millions are affected by such system backlogs. Furthermore, one can discern clear immigrant support for improving a system that will reunite families, which is reflective of an overall pro-immigrant stance. The quote above

is a borderline statement between the pro-immigrant categories, even if the complete press release received a score of “.5,” as it depicts clear sympathy with immigrants facing backlogs and separation. With the average release firmly in between the pro-immigrant and strongly pro-immigrant categories, this borderline statement thoroughly encapsulates overall immigration sentiment from the caucus in the pre-Trump era.

However, in the Trump era, the Congressional Asian Pacific American Caucus increased their pro-immigrant sentiment and frequency of immigration related releases substantially. In the Trump era spanning from the years of 2016 to 2021, seventy-one identified press statements were released, receiving an average interpretive score of .711 ($\bar{x}_{2Asian} = .718, n_{2Asian}=71$), merely halfway between a baseline pro-immigrant stance and strongly pro-immigrant stance. Such a shift also thoroughly aligns itself with the Democratic Party’s pro-immigrant shift between 2012 and 2016- 2020, especially with the caucus being merely exclusively composed of Democratic representatives.

However, similar to pre-Trump era responses, the caucus released no anti-immigrant statements, and released seven neutral statements in the Trump era. Such neutral responses did not contain significant anti-immigrant and pro-immigrant sentiments, but rather did not contain a significant direct immigrant discussion that allowed for a pro or anti-immigrant assessment.

Conducting a two-sample *t*-test to confirm statistical significance, the following results occur:

$$H_0: \bar{x}_{2Asian} - \bar{x}_{1Asian} = 0$$

$$H_a: \bar{x}_{2Asian} - \bar{x}_{1Asian} > 0$$

$$df = 96.34$$

$$t = -1.957$$

$$p = .0266$$

$$p < .05$$

The results above narrowly confirm statistical significance between Pre-Trump era releases and the Trump era releases for the caucus. A pro-immigrant shift in how the Congressional Asian Pacific American Caucus discussed immigration in the Trump era is present, even if the group was thoroughly a pro-immigrant group in their pre-Trump releases.

Regarding pertinence or frequency of releases, statistical analysis is not necessary due to the clear increase in releases by over 57%. However, the figure below will demonstrate the frequency of releases by each year in their respective eras.

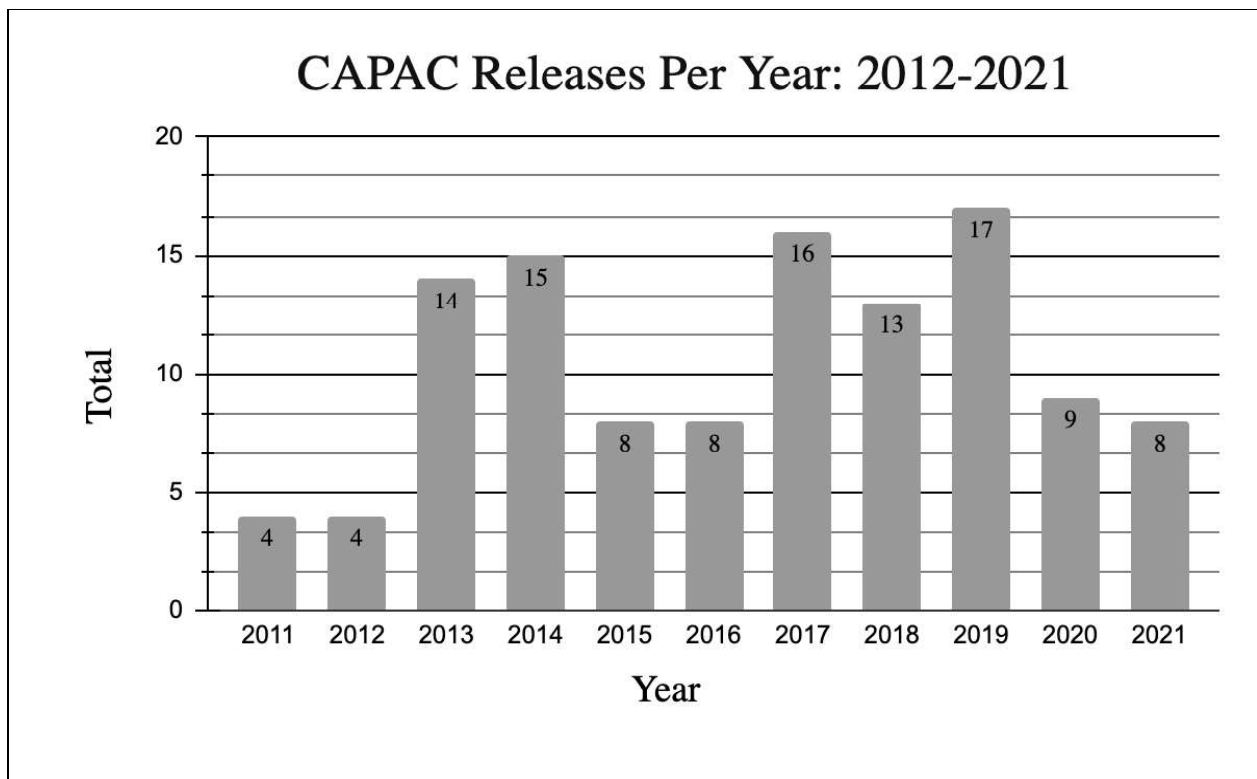


Figure Two: Congressional Asian Pacific American Caucus Press Releases by Year

As demonstrated in Figure Two, one can clearly discern a significant increase in releases once President Trump was inaugurated in 2017. Such release totals remained at the upper bounds of the pre-Trump era for the first three years of the presidency with 2020 seeing a notable decrease which can be attributed to the COVID-19 pandemic that overshadowed many other issues in 2020. Furthermore in 2017, the dominant theme of DACA was most thoroughly present in such releases. The caucus repeatedly demonstrated strong support for DACA recipients following Trump's announcement of terminating the deferment program. Additionally, when President Trump was only the Republican nominee, only eight releases were published in 2016, with no identified statements being released immediately following Trump's electoral victory in November. Overall, these are both unexpected developments in examining such releases.

Concerning the pre-Trump years, releases also underwent a general increase toward the end of the established era. In 2013 and 2014, the two years with peak release totals, as mentioned above, family unification as part of comprehensive immigration reform dominated such discussions in 2013 and remained thoroughly present in 2014. Another surprising development was the lack of immigration releases in 2012, where denouncing Republican candidates' immigration stances and proposed policies could easily arise; yet no releases of this nature were identified in 2012 or in 2016 when Trump was a candidate and nominee for President.

Further discussing the Caucus' discussion of Deferred Action for Childhood Arrival, disproportionate devotion was given toward the policy and its recipients. Out of the seventy-one identified Trump-era press releases, approximately thirty-three contained at least a brief mention of the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) or "DREAMers," merely half of all releases in the era. The framing of the policy and Dreamers was centered around creating opportunities for such groups and how truly American they are as recurring phrases within such

releases included “Come out of the Shadows” and “American in every way except on paper.” Furthermore, an overwhelming majority of these documents were coded as strongly pro-immigrant, as twenty-two of the thirty-three DACA related documents received codes of “1.” The quote below thoroughly encapsulates the Caucus’ sentiment regarding DACA and “DREAMers.”

“DREAMers are deeply woven into the fabric of our nation, including the many undocumented Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders who arrived in the United States as children through no fault of their own. Thanks to DACA, many of these DREAMers have been able to come out of the shadows, give back to their communities, contribute to our society, and strengthen our nation. Targeting these individuals for deportation is both morally reprehensible and disruptive to our economy.” -Congressional Asian Pacific American Caucus 05 September 2017.

Within the quote one can easily discern the Caucus’ firm support for “DREAMers.” The Caucus notes how deeply connected “DREAMers” are within American communities and how they contribute to the nation’s economy, both thoroughly pro-immigrant sentiments. Additionally, the statement highlights a firm disapproval of Trump’s proposed policy toward “DREAMers” by not only highlighting how damaging such reforms would impose on the economy, but also through a moral lens. This statement is a clear example of a “strongly pro-immigrant” attitude from the caucus and a representative reflection of how strongly pro-immigrant the caucus was in the era of Trump.

“The future of our nation’s immigration policy should not be dictated by Donald Trump’s personal prejudice and intolerance. America has always drawn strength from its diversity, and our nation has been enriched by the contributions of immigrants from all over the globe.” -Congressional Asian Pacific American Caucus 11 January 2018.

In concluding the assessment of the Congressional Asian Pacific American Caucus, a discussion of more modest pro-immigrant sentiments from the caucus is also necessary. As seen in the statement above, a clear contrast and disapproval from Trump's immigration policy is established through highlighting Trump's potential underlying prejudice or disdain for immigrants. Furthermore, the caucus includes affirmative sentiments highlighting how beneficial immigrants are and how diversity strengthens the country. However, the statement, like many releases in the era, are simply modest compliments of immigrants without expressing such sentiment with strong emphasis.

Congressional Black Caucus

After examining press releases from the Congressional Black Caucus, a total of only twenty-six releases primarily related toward immigration were identified. Moreover in the Pre-Trump era only five press statements ($n_{Black} = 5$) were released by the Caucus from 2013-2015, with no available releases from earlier years of the Pre-Trump era. With such a low sample size, measuring a shift in attitudes²³ from the Pre-Trump era to Trump era cannot be the focus of these caucus statements. Furthermore, within the five statements released two of the statements were purely informational statements regarding an upcoming immigration forum, which only further limits the applicability of statements from the pre-Trump era.

However, measuring salience or frequency of statements is still applicable with Congressional Black Caucus press releases. In the Trump era, a total of 21 press releases ($n_{Black} = 21$) were produced by the Congressional Black Caucus from 2016-2021, with no releases being identified in 2021. Such a position appears less pro-immigrant than the national Democratic Party, even though merely every caucus member is a Democratic representative. However, such an immigrant sentiment position could be more in alignment if more releases on immigration

²³ The mean code value for the Congressional Black Caucus in the Pre-Trump era was .4.

were published. Publishing more releases would allow the caucus to further pronounce such strong pro-immigrant sentiments, as no apparent disagreements with the national party arose in this era. Meanwhile, between the two eras, the caucus released over four times the amount of press releases compared to the pre-Trump era. With such an increase one can clearly discern a very significant increase in salience of discussing immigration from the Congressional Black Caucus.

Additionally, examining immigration sentiment within the Trump era from Congressional Black Caucus press releases is still applicable in assessing immigration attitudes, even if a sample size is lacking in one era. Out of the twenty-one identified Trump era press releases, the Congressional Black Caucus' overall immigration attitude mean score was .595 ($x_{2Black} = .595$), indicating a largely basic pro-immigrant stance in the era. Moreover, the Congressional Black Caucus only received neutral, pro-immigrant, or strongly-immigrant codes, indicating no overall anti-immigrant sentiment in any release. The selected quote below is a very representative sentiment of the caucus within the Trump era.

“The Trump Administration’s new public charge rule is yet another cruel attempt to frighten and intimidate immigrant communities. It contradicts years of federal policy by restructuring our immigration system so that it favors the wealthy over communities of color and working families. Moreover, it relies on the false narrative that immigrants are a ‘burden’ on our country and ignores the fact that our country was built and continues to grow because of the contributions and sacrifices of immigrant families.” -Congressional Black Caucus, 14 August 2019.

The statement above was selected from a release receiving a pro-immigrant score and demonstrates the Congressional Black Caucus' clear support for immigrants. Within the statement, one can see the caucus clearly denouncing President Trump's new public charge rule,

a strongly anti-immigrant policy. Moreover, the caucus contrasts themselves with Trump's policy proposal by countering the myth that immigrants pose a burden on the U.S. economy, in turn, adopting a pro-immigrant sentiment. Simultaneously, the caucus also emphasizes that the country has always benefited from the contributions of immigrants, ultimately a strongly pro-immigrant sentiment. However, the statement is representative of only a basic level of pro-immigrant sentiment. The statement indeed establishes clear immigrant support but lacks a pronounced tone and diction that depict either unwavering support or one of the most pro-immigrant stances possible that many other releases include.

Observational Findings

Pathways to Citizenship: Asians

Examining Asian Americans' attitudes on undocumented immigrants holding a path toward U.S. citizenship, no significant pro-immigrant shift can be appropriately discerned from the pre-Trump era to Trump era. The 2012 and 2016 National Asian American Surveys both asked merely identical questions²⁴ on the path toward U.S. citizenship. In 2012,²⁵ 58% or approximately 2758 of the 4755 ($x_{1Asian} = 2758$, $n_{1Asian} = 4755$) Asian respondents agreed that undocumented immigrants should receive a pathway to U.S. citizenship. However, in 2016²⁶, support increases to 66.1% or approximately 4,262 out of the 6,448 respondents ($x_{2Asian} = 4,262$, $n_{2Asian} = 6448$) at least "Somewhat" or "Strongly" agreed that undocumented immigrants should

²⁴ The 2012 survey only included an "Agree" answer response while the 2020 survey allowed respondents to respond with "Strongly Agree" and "Somewhat Agree."

²⁵ Access to 2012 National Asian American Survey Results: <http://naasurvey.com/reports/>

²⁶ The 2008 and 2016 National Asian American Surveys also posed variations of the pathway to citizenship question. The 2008 administration asked if the United States should provide a path to US. Citizenship for people in the country illegally, receiving a total of 30.2% of respondents either "strongly agreeing" or "somewhat agreeing."

hold a pathway toward receiving U.S. citizenship.²⁷ Conducting a two-sample proportion z-test with the p-value threshold of .05 ($p=.05$) we receive the following z-score and p-value:

$$H_0: x_{2Asian} - x_{1Asian} = 0$$

$$H_a: x_{2Asian} - x_{1Asian} > 0$$

$$z = -8.756$$

$$p = .0$$

$$p < .05$$

After conducting the two-sample proportion z-test to examine potential significance difference between the pre-Trump and Trump eras, a statistically distinguishable difference is confirmed by such results. Such a difference may indicate a clear increase in pro-immigrant sentiment has occurred on the pathway to citizenship issue for Asian Americans, according to this election survey.

However, when further accounting for a potential shift as the Trump era progresses, 2020 results from another survey display opposing results, indicating that no overall shift has occurred. The 2020 Asian American Voters Survey²⁸ posed an identical question asking if undocumented immigrants should have the opportunity to become citizens of the United States. In this 2020 survey administration, only 59% of respondents at least “Somewhat” agreed or “Strongly” agreed that undocumented immigrants should receive such an opportunity, approximately 925 out of the 1,568 respondents to this question ($x_{2Asian} = 4,262$ $n_{2Asian} = 6448$). With only a 1% increase, no significant shift in opinion is present when comparing such results to the 2012 National Asian American Survey, the last pre-Trump era survey administration posing such a question.

²⁷ Access to 2016 National Asian American Survey Results: <https://www.icpsr.umich.edu/web/RCMD/studies/37380>

²⁸ For access to 2020 Asian American Voters Survey: <https://aapidata.com/2020-survey/>

Moreover, no pre-Trump era surveys for the Asian American Voters Survey were available, preventing such statistical analysis from being conducted. A pre-Trump era survey may have initially held lower overall support than the 2012 National Asian American Survey already examined. While no statistical analysis can be conducted, noting this poll's results effectively undermines concluding that a definitive pro-immigrant shift has occurred among Asians in the issue domain of pathways to citizenship for undocumented immigrants.

Pathways to Citizenship (Conditional): Asians

Additionally, when asked a conditional citizenship question, no affirmative shift exists in either a pro-immigrant or anti-immigrant direction among Asians between the pre-Trump and Trump eras. The 2008²⁹ and 2020 Collaborative Multiracial Post-Election surveys posed merely identical questions to Asian respondents asking if undocumented or illegal immigrants should qualify for citizenship if such immigrants pay back taxes, learn English, and pass a background check.³⁰ In the 2008 survey administration,³¹ a combined 70.67% of respondents either “Somewhat” agreed or “Strongly” agreed, the two most pro-immigrant response options present³², that undocumented immigrants should qualify for U.S. citizenship, approximately 649 out of 919 Asian respondents surveyed ($x_{Asian} = 649$, $n_{Asian} = 919$). However, in the 2020³³

²⁹ The 2012 Collaborative Multiracial Post-Election Survey only recorded responses for Latinos and African Americans, resulting in unavailable data for Asian Americans.

³⁰ The 2008 CMPS survey administration utilized the term “Illegal immigrants” in the question wording while the 2020 CMPS survey utilized the term “Undocumented immigrants.”

³¹ For access to 2008 Collaborative Multiracial Post-Election Survey:
<https://www.icpsr.umich.edu/web/RCMD/studies/35163/datadocumentation>

³² Adopting such sentiment in the interpretive sections was coded as an anti-immigrant sentiment in comparison to unconditional pathways to citizenship.

³³ The 2016 CMPS survey found a combined 69% of “strong” or “somewhat support” among Asian respondents with combined opposition (“Strong” and “Somewhat”) at 13%.

administration,³⁴ 63% of Asian respondents “Somewhat” supported or “Strongly” supported that undocumented immigrants should qualify, an approximate total of 2504 out of 3975 respondents ($x_{2Asian} = 2504$, $n_{2Asian} = 3975$), a decrease from 2008. To confirm a potential shift, the two-sample proportion z-test produces the following results:

$$H_0: x_{2Asian} - x_{1Asian} = 0$$

$$H_a: x_{2Asian} - x_{1Asian} < 0$$

$$z = 4.352$$

$$p = 6.739E-6$$

$$p < .05$$

The results above confirm that one should reject the null hypothesis, signifying that a notable difference in a rather anti-immigrant sentiment between the pre-Trump and Trump era surveys exists. Furthermore, as highlighted in an above footnote, with the 2016 survey administration holding merely identical results as the 2008 survey with having approximately 69% combined moderate and strong agreement, one can see a downward shift in pro-immigrant shift within the Trump era as well.

However, an anti-immigrant increase is not affirmatively present among Asian-Americans between the two survey administrations. Assessing levels of opposition, the 2008 CMPS survey, 19.96% of respondents either “Strongly” or “Somewhat” disagreed such citizenship opportunities if specific conditions were satisfied, or a combined approximation of 183 out of 919 respondents ($x_{1Asian} = 183$, $n_{1Asian} = 919$). However, in the 2020 survey administration, only 14% of respondents either “Strongly” or “Somewhat” opposed the

³⁴ For access to 2020 Collaborative Multiracial Post-Election Survey (topline results only): <https://cmgsurvey.org/2020-survey/>

conditional citizenship pathway, or approximately 557 out of 3,975 respondents ($x_{2Asian} = 557$, $n_{2Asian} = 3975$). The two-sample proportion z-test produces the following results

$$H_0: x_{2Asian} - x_{1Asian} = 0$$

$$H_a: x_{2Asian} - x_{1Asian} < 0$$

$$z = 4.450$$

$$p = 3.405E-6$$

$$p < .05$$

Like the analysis above, one should also reject the null hypothesis, and even with a one-tailed z-test, a true difference between the pre-Trump survey and Trump era survey exists. Thus, neither a pro-immigrant nor an anti-immigrant shift has affirmatively occurred regarding receiving citizenship if undocumented immigrants have satisfied conditions other American citizens are expected to satisfy.

Additionally, Pew Research Center's 2021 assessment of a similar question yields highly similar results as the 2020 Collaborative Multiracial Post-Election Survey, only strengthening the suggestion of no shift occurring. In a 2021 Pew survey administration,³⁵ Asian respondents were initially asked what is closer to their view: "Undocumented immigrants should not be allowed to stay in the country legally" or "Should be a way for undocumented immigrants to stay in the country legally if certain requirements are met." Within the former response option, if selected, respondents were then tasked with selecting: "Should be a national effort to deport them" or "Should not be a national effort to deport them." Within the latter response option, if selected, respondents were offered two policy options of: "Should be eligible to apply for permanent residency, but not U.S. citizenship" and "U.S. Citizenship." Primarily focusing on the latter

³⁵ For access to the 2021 Pew Survey Administration's results:
<https://www.pewresearch.org/politics/2021/05/03/most-americans-are-critical-of-governments-handling-of-situation-at-u-s-mexico-border/>

response options, the two more pro-immigrant response options, a combined 68% of respondents agreed that there should be a way for undocumented immigrants to remain in the country. Within the 68% a split between permanent residency and U.S. citizenship arose as 37% overall supported citizenship with 31% overall supporting permanent residency. Meanwhile, assessing the two anti-immigrant response options, a combined 30% of Asian respondents selected the option that undocumented immigrants should not be allowed to legally stay in the country. Within that 30%, 27% of the overall survey's respondents agreed that there should be a national effort to deport such undocumented immigrants, approximately 90% of the anti-immigrant respondents selecting the most anti-immigrant stance.

Pathways to Citizenship (Conditional): African Americans

When assessing conditional pathways to citizenship among African Americans, a distinct pro-immigrant shift occurs between the two eras of study. In the 2012 Collaborative Multiracial Post-Election Survey, a combined 60.2% either “Somewhat” agreed or “Strongly” agreed that undocumented immigrants should qualify for citizenship if they meet certain conditions such as paying back taxes or learning english, approximately 484 of 808 Black respondents ($x_{1Black} = 484$, $n_{1Black} = 808$). However, in the 2020 CMPS administration, combined support approaches 67% among Black Americans or approximately 2,683 of the 4,005 surveyed ($x_{2Black} = 2,683$, $n_{2Black} = 4,005$). From the two-proportion z-test, the following test statistics arise.

$$H_0: x_{2Black} - x_{1Black} = 0$$

$$H_a: x_{2Black} - x_{1Black} > 0$$

$$z = -3.706$$

$$p = .1.05E-4$$

$$p < .05$$

The results from the two proportion z-test confirm a difference or increase between the pre-Trump era and Trump-era surveys. Such results indicate that toward the end of the defined Trump era, African Americans were more pro-immigrant on pathways to citizenship than in the Pre-Trump era.

Conditional Citizenship Pathways (Undocumented): Latinos

Measuring conditional citizenship pathways for undocumented immigrants, a pro-immigrant shift also occurs among Latino respondents. Under the 2012 and 2020 Collaborative Multiracial Post-Election Survey, I analyzed the question of whether or not undocumented immigrants should be able to qualify for U.S. citizenship if they learn English, pay back taxes, and pass a background check. Within the 2012 survey, a commanding 69.27% of Latinos either “Somewhat” agreed or “Strongly” agreed, a numerical approximation of 647 of 934 surveyed ($x_{1Latino} = 647, n_{1Latino} = 934$). Even though such agreement was already high, the 2020 survey witnessed an increase to 73% combined support or approximately 2924 of the 4006 Latino respondents agreeing ($x_{2Latino} = 2,924, n_{2Latino} = 4,006$). The two proportion z-test produces the following results on the difference between the two surveys.

$$H_0: x_{2Latino} - x_{1Latino} = 0$$

$$H_a: x_{2Latino} - x_{1Latino} > 0$$

$$z = -2.286$$

$$p = .0111$$

$$p < .05$$

With establishing the alpha threshold value of .05, a notable difference or increase is confirmed by the two-proportion z-test. Regarding pathways to citizenship for undocumented

immigrants, if major conditions are satisfied, a pro-immigrant shift among Latinos is present during the Trump era.

Obtaining Driver’s Licenses (Undocumented Immigrants): Asians

Concerning undocumented immigrants being able to obtain driver’s licenses in their respective states, a pro-immigrant shift is apparent between the two eras. Due to the scarcity of survey results obtained for Asian Americans in this thesis, this specific immigration issue will provide necessary statistical inferences in assessing the project’s hypotheses. Such a question was recorded by the 2012 and 2016 National Asian American surveys where very similar to merely identical questions were posed to respondents.³⁶In the 2012 survey, a combined 47% of respondents “Strongly” agreed or “Somewhat” agreed that undocumented immigrants should receive driver’s licenses, or approximately 1426 out of 3034 respondents ($x_{1Asian} = 1426$, $n_{1Asian} = 3034$). However, in the 2016 survey, a combined 55% percent “Strongly” agreed or “Somewhat” agreed that states should provide driver’s licenses regardless of one’s immigration status, or a total of 3546 out of 6448 respondents ($x_{2Asian} = 3546$, $n_{2Asian} = 6448$). Meanwhile, only 31.4% of respondents “Somewhat” or “Strongly” disagreed with providing such access, demonstrating that significant opposition is present with the issue, yet is not a contentious or polarizing issue. With the questions holding identical meaning, the two-sample proportion z-test yields the following results:

$$H_0: x_{2Asian} - x_{1Asian} = 0$$

$$H_a: x_{2Asian} - x_{1Asian} > 0$$

$$z = -7.270$$

$$p = 0$$

³⁶ The 2012 NAAS administration asked for respondents on how much they agree or disagree that undocumented immigrants should be able to obtain driver’s licenses. The 2016 survey asked respondents how much they agree or disagree that states should provide driver’s licenses to all residents, regardless of immigration status.

$$p < .05$$

The results above allow one to reject the null hypothesis, demonstrating that a clear pro-immigrant shift has occurred between the two survey administrations. However, such results should hold limitations due to the shift in question wording from undocumented immigrants to regardless of immigration status. No apparent biases arise with the question wording change as they are equally worded in a pro-immigrant manner, yet the notable shift in wording may confound such results rather than reflect a pure shift in immigration sentiment among Asians.

While the driver's license question may have only been administered in the 2016 survey administration, a question relating to access to another essential good in health insurance further solidifies such opinion in the Trump era. In the 2020 Asian Americans Voter survey, respondents were asked if the government should expand health insurance access to all regardless of one's immigration status. A combined 55% of respondents within the survey either "Somewhat" or "Strongly" agreed that healthcare access should be allowed, or an approximate total of 862 out of 1567 respondents ($x_{2Asian} = 862$, $n_{2Asian} = 1,567$). Consequently, only a combined 24% "Somewhat" or "Strongly" disagreed that health insurance access should be provided to immigrants. Such results demonstrate that the driver's license issue is not very contentious among Asian Americans, even if affirmative support could be considerably increased. One may argue that health insurance access is a more essential good than access to driver's licenses, and therefore the comparison is less relevant. However, one can ultimately discern that a decent majority of Asians still support access to essential goods regardless of immigration status through the Trump era, undermining the potential for an anti-immigrant shift to have occurred in the Trump era.

Impact on Economy: Asians

Asian American attitudes on immigrants' impact on the U.S. economy, exhibit an apparent shift from 2008 to 2016, the pre-Trump and Trump eras respectively. The 2008 Collaborative Multiracial Post-Election survey³⁷ asked Asian respondents if they believed immigrants had an overall positive impact on the economy, and a combined 69.87% of Asians at least "Somewhat" agreed. However, when asked the polar opposite question version in 2016, if immigrants held an overall negative impact on the U.S. economy, only 48% of Asians at least "Somewhat" disagreed or strongly disagreed with the statement. Such results would indicate a strong anti-immigrant shift between the two surveys, but one can easily question whether the question wording's impact is too significant to draw statistical inferences. The question wording reversal may have easily influenced respondents to predominantly consider potential pros or cons they attribute to immigrants, which can significantly alter results in either survey.

However, a noteworthy and applicable observation is that the "Neither Agree nor Disagree" response option, the neutral immigration stance, was selected by only 6.6% of Asian respondents in 2008, but increased to 36% in the 2016 administration of the survey. With the question essentially reversing itself in response options, assessing the neutral immigration stance may provide additional insight into overall opinion for this issue domain. However, when combining elements of these two surveys, with divergent results depending on the question wording, but a stark increase in neutral sentiment, clear ambiguity emerges from the results.

Impact on Economy: African Americans

Examining Black or African American attitudes on immigrants impact on the economy, inconclusive results emerge when assessing a potential attitude shift. To assess potential attitude shifts in this issue area among African Americans, the 2012 and 2016 administrations of the

³⁷ For access to 2008 Collaborative Multiracial Post-Election Survey data:
<https://www.icpsr.umich.edu/web/RCMD/studies/35163/datadocumentation>

Collaborative Multiracial Post-Election Survey were utilized. The Pre-Trump era survey asked if immigrants had an overall positive impact on the economy, while including the same response options as the 2008 pre-Trump era survey posed for Asians. Additionally, the Trump era survey asked if immigrants hold an overall negative impact on the economy with the same response options that were allotted to Asian respondents described above. Regarding the 2012 survey, administration's results, 32.05% respondents or a total average approximation of 258 out of 804 respondents ($x_{1Black} = 258$, $n_{1Black} = 804$) "Strongly" or "Somewhat" agreed that immigrants hold an overall positive effect on the U.S. economy. Meanwhile, in the 2016 survey 46% of Black respondents, or an approximate total of 1,427 out of 3,102 ($x_{2Black} = 1427$, $n_{2Black} = 3,102$) "Strongly" or "Somewhat" disagreed that immigrants have an overall negative impact on the country's economy.

At first glance, one may perceive a pro-immigrant shift as a clear increase in pro-immigrant responses exists. However, as previously mentioned, with the question wording changing to measure a negative impact, one cannot conclude that disagreement in the Trump-era survey is equivalent to agreeing that immigrants positively impact the economy. Furthermore, the 2008 Collaborative Multiracial Post-Election Survey's results would suggest an overall anti-immigrant shift is present between the eras. In the 2008 survey administration, a combined 61.21% of Black respondents strongly or somewhat agreed that immigrants positively impacted the economy, a drastically greater level of agreement compared to the 2012 administration. Combined with the question-wording discrepancies above, significant ambiguity arises when measuring attitudes on immigrant's economic impacts, ultimately deeming the results inconclusive for this issue domain.

Impact on Economy: Latinos

Examining Latino's attitudes on Immigrants impact on the U.S. economy, establishing any attitude shift from Pre-Trump to Trump era cannot be determined. The 2008, 2012, and 2016 Collaborative Multiracial Post-Election Surveys posed merely identical questions between the pre-Trump and Trump eras with the 2008 and 2012 surveys asking respondents if immigrants have an overall positive impact on the economy, while in the 2016 the survey asked respondents if immigrants have an overall negative impact on the economy.

In the 2012 Collaborative Multiracial Post-Election Survey, 57.28% of Latino respondents "Somewhat" or "Strongly" agreed that immigrants have a positive economic impact, approximately 535 of 934 Latino respondents ($x_{1\text{Latino}} = 535$, $n_{1\text{Latino}} = 934$). However, when assessing the 2016 survey, 60% of Latino respondents or a total of 1,802 out of 3,003 ($x_{2\text{Latino}} = 1,802$, $n_{2\text{Latino}} = 3,003$) respondents somewhat or strongly disagreed that immigrants have an overall negative impact on the economy. However, as previously noted with polar opposite question wording, statistical analysis cannot be appropriately conducted with such results.

Utilizing the results previously mentioned, one cannot easily discern any distinguishable pro-immigrant shift. However, evidence for no overall shift can be established due to the question wording. As one can discern from the results, mirroring of responses is not present between the two survey administrations, demonstrating clear potential for question wording impacts. As previously mentioned, disagreeing with the statement that immigrants negatively impact the economy, does not indicate the belief immigrants positively impact the economy. Additionally, as seen with the 2008 results among Black Americans, including the 2008 survey administration would actually suggest an anti-immigrant shift for Latinos as well. In the 2008 survey administration, a combined 70.78% of Latino respondents agreed that immigrants positively impact the economy. If assuming the two questions were nearly identical assessments,

an anti-immigrant shift is present between the two eras. With divergent pre-Trump era survey results and question wording discrepancies, determining that no shift or an anti-immigrant shift is present is an inappropriate conclusion.

Job Threat: African Americans

Similar to measuring impact on the domestic economy, the fear of immigrants taking one's job has been a dominant feature of immigration discussions, and between the pre-Trump and Trump eras, African Americans underwent a pro-immigrant shift on this belief. The American National Election Study asked Black respondents on how likely immigrants are to take away jobs from those in the country with options including "Extremely likely," "Very likely," "Somewhat likely," and "Not at all likely" in both the 2012 and 2016 election surveys. Gauging support and shifts for the "Not at all likely" option, the only apparent pro-immigrant answer choice, the 2012 survey³⁸ witnessed 17.62% of Black respondents holding the position, or approximately 166 out of 942 Black respondents surveyed ($x_{1Black} = 166$, $n_{1Black} = 942$). Meanwhile, in the 2016 survey,³⁹ 25.81% of Black respondents held the "not at all likely" position, or an approximate total of 103 out of 399 respondents ($x_{2Black} = 103$, $n_{2Black} = 399$). With such results, a two-sample proportion z-test yields the following results to confirm a distinguishable difference.

$$H_0: x_{2Black} - x_{1Black} = 0$$

$$H_a: x_{2Black} - x_{1Black} > 0$$

$$z = -3.425$$

$$p = 3.07E-4$$

$$p < .05$$

³⁸ For access to 2012 American National Election Study data:
<https://electionstudies.org/data-center/2012-time-series-study/>

³⁹ For access to 2016 American National Election Study data:
<https://electionstudies.org/data-center/2016-time-series-study/>

The results above strongly suggest that the null hypothesis must be rejected, indicating a truly significant difference in responses among African Americans between the two surveys. A pro-immigrant shift between the two survey sets, even if the sample size in the 2016 administration is significantly smaller, continues to suggest such a shift.

Job Threat: Latinos

Similar to the results of African Americans described above, Latinos also underwent a pro-immigrant shift on the belief of immigrants taking jobs from American workers between the two eras. When measuring response rates for the “Not at all likely” option, the only pro-immigrant response option the American National Election Study surveys offered in 2012 and 2016, a small yet still significant shift arises. In 2012, 32.52% of Latinos held the “Not at all Likely” position, or an approximate numerical value of 295 of 907 respondents ($x_{1\text{Latino}} = 295$, $n_{1\text{Latino}} = 907$). However, in 2016, 40.4% of Latinos selected the same response option, or approximately 143 of 354 respondents ($x_{2\text{Latino}} = 143$, $n_{2\text{Latino}} = 354$). With such results, the two-proportion z-test used repeatedly above should be utilized to assess such results and yields the following results.

$$H_0: x_{2\text{Latino}} - x_{1\text{Latino}} = 0$$

$$H_a: x_{2\text{Latino}} - x_{1\text{Latino}} > 0$$

$$z = -2.6377$$

$$p = .004$$

$$p < .05$$

With the results above, the null hypothesis is also rejected and demonstrates that a difference between the two surveys’ results is significant. These results indicate that a significant

pro-immigrant shift has arisen with Latinos on immigrants potentially taking American jobs with such a low p-value well below our standard threshold.

Immigration Levels: Latinos

Assessing desired immigration levels among Latinos, no statistically significant shift occurred in a pro-immigrant or anti-immigrant direction during the Trump era. The 2012 and 2016 American National Election Study asked respondents if the number of immigrants permitted to live in the United States should be increased, stayed at the same level or decreased with additional options of decreasing or increasing “A little” or “A lot.” In the 2012 survey, only 19.8% of Latinos, or an approximate total of 178 out of 899 respondents ($x_{1\text{Latino}} = 178$, $n_{1\text{Latino}} = 899$), believed immigration levels should be increased either “A little” or “A lot,” the two pro-immigrant stances within this question’s response set. Meanwhile, within the 2016 survey, only 19.49% of respondents, or a total of 69 out of 354 respondents ($x_{2\text{Latino}} = 69$, $n_{2\text{Latino}} = 354$) believed in such increase levels.

Measuring pro-immigrant attitudes shifts are not necessary with such results due to the merely identical proportions present between the two surveys. However, measuring a potential anti-immigrant shift with this response set may yield more insightful results. In the 2012 survey, 29.81% of Latinos believed immigration should be decreased by at least some magnitude, or an approximate total of 270 out of 899 respondents ($x_{1\text{Latino}} = 270$, $n_{1\text{Latino}} = 899$). Regarding the 2016 survey result 31.92% of Latinos believed immigration levels should decrease to some degree, or an approximate total of 113 out of 354 respondents ($x_{2\text{Latino}} = 113$, $n_{2\text{Latino}} = 354$). Even with vastly different sample sizes between the two election surveys, the two-sample proportion z-test is still applicable and yields the following results:

$$H_0: x_{2Latino} - x_{1Latino} = 0$$

$$H_a: x_{2Latino} - x_{1Latino} > 0$$

$$z = -.653$$

$$p = .257$$

$$p > .05$$

After conducting the two-proportion z-test to gauge a potential anti-immigrant shift, one still cannot reject the null hypothesis. With an incredibly high p -value, one would not be able to discern significance or difference between these two eras on any reasonable threshold. The results ultimately indicate that no statistically significant shift is present in neither a pro-immigrant nor anti-immigrant direction from the pre-Trump era to the Trump-era.

Immigration Levels: African Americans

Contrary to the results of Latinos between these eras, African Americans underwent a statistically significant pro-immigrant shift on the immigration levels topic. The 2012 and 2016 American National Election Study administrations posed the same question to African Americans as Latinos in gauging whether there should be an increase of immigrants being admitted into the country. In the pre-Trump era, 12.8% of Black respondents, or an approximate value of 120 out of 940 respondents ($x_{1Black} = 120$, $n_{1Black} = 940$) believed immigration levels should be increased at least “A little.” However, when examining the 2016 survey, the percentage increased to 17.4% or an approximate total of 69 out of 397 respondents ($x_{2Black} = 69$, $n_{2Black} = 397$). When conducting the two-sample proportion z-test, the following results occur.

$$H_0: x_{2Black} - x_{1Black} = 0$$

$$H_a: x_{2Black} - x_{1Black} > 0$$

$$z = -2.21$$

$$p=.013$$

$$p < .05$$

At surface level, one could already discern a shift among Black respondents between the two eras. The statistical test confirms such assumptions that a pro-immigrant shift has occurred between the pre-Trump and Trump eras among Black Americans under the standard .05 threshold.

Undocumented Immigrant Policy: Latinos

Assessing support for two anti-immigrant policies and two pro-immigrant policies, such results demonstrate a strong stagnation of beliefs between the two eras. The 2012 and 2016 American National Election Studies administered a rather unconventional question where they gauged support for deeming undocumented immigrants felons and deporting such immigrants, creating a guest worker program in order for immigrants to work, creating a pathway to citizenship for undocumented immigrants if they meet certain requirements, and lastly, to allow undocumented immigrants to remain in the United States and unconditionally become citizens. Regarding support for deportation, in 2012, 7.92% of Latinos supported such a policy ($x_{1\text{Latino}} = .0792$), indicating that such a position is not dominantly held among Latinos. Moreover, when re-assessing the deportation policy's support in 2016, the beginning of the Trump era, support slightly decreases to 6.35% ($x_{2\text{Latino}} = .0635$), a very slight change in opinion. Regarding the most dominantly held position, allowing for undocumented immigrant citizenship if certain conditions are satisfied, in 2012, 63.73% ($x_{1\text{Latino}} = .6373$) of Latinos primarily supported this position. However, in 2016, support for the conditional citizenship path only increases to 64.47% ($x_{2\text{Latino}}$

=.6447), a very negligible increase for support among Latinos. The figure below clearly displays how such policy stances on undocumented immigrants remained constant between the two eras.

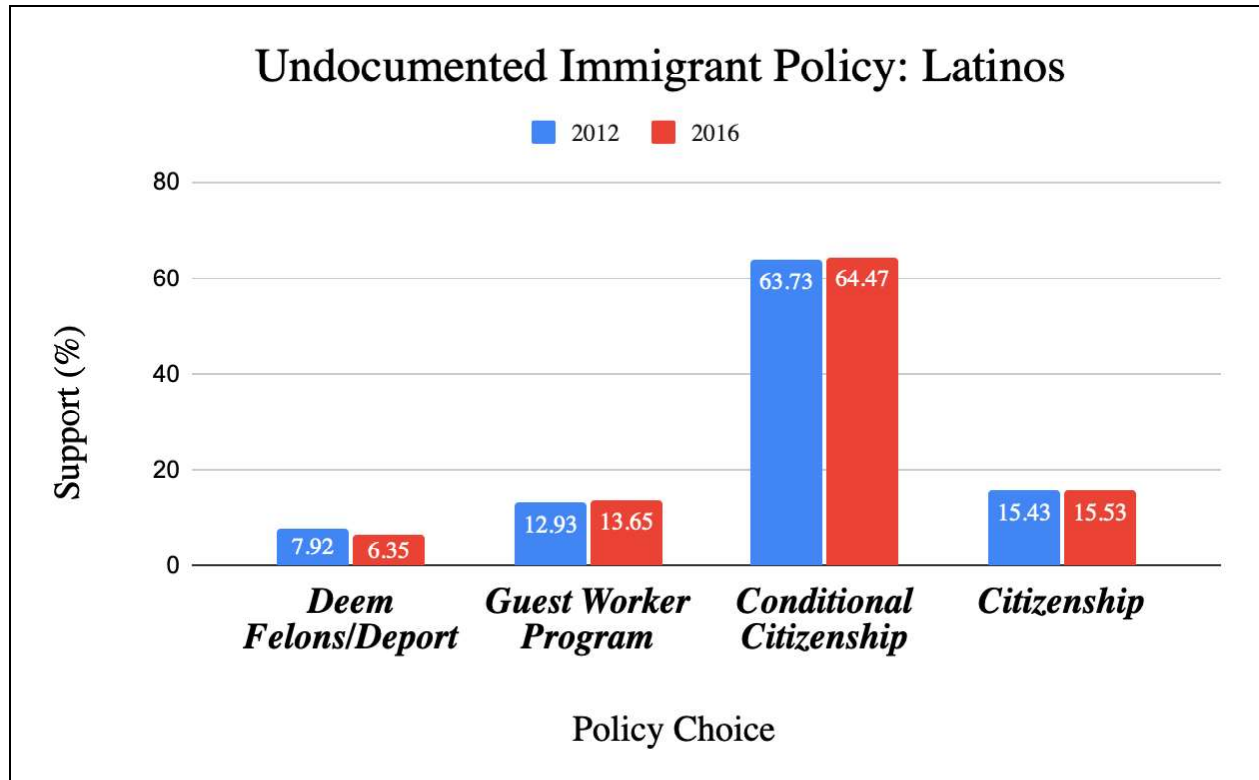


Figure Three: ANES Undocumented Immigrant Policy Stances among Latinos

As seen above, no policy option underwent any significant shift between the 2012 and 2016 survey administrations. On this immigration topic, Latinos overwhelmingly maintained pro-immigrant stances with the two widely supported policies of creating conditional citizenship pathways and pathways to citizenship without penalties receiving combined support of over 75% in both surveys.

Undocumented Immigrant Policy: African Americans

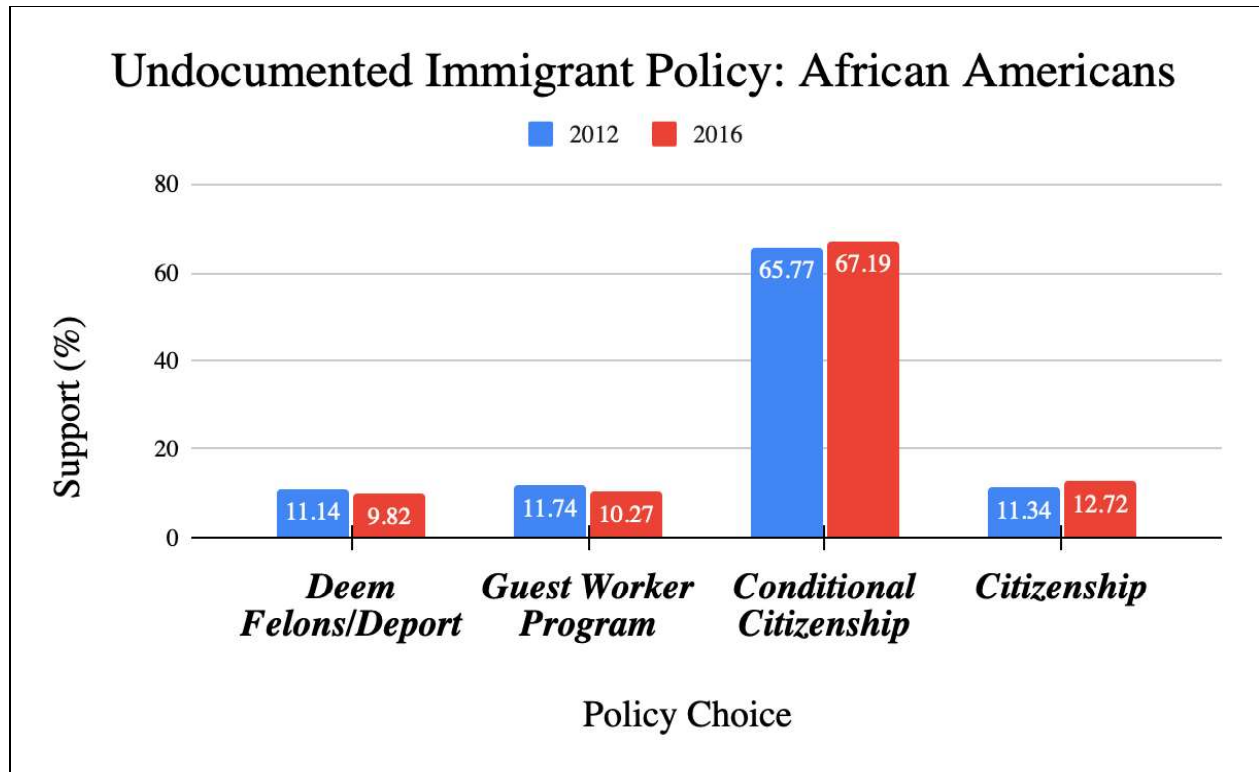


Figure Four: ANES Undocumented Immigrant Policy Stances among African Americans

Similar to results for Latinos, African Americans' immigration stances on policy for undocumented immigrants remained largely unchanged as the Trump era arrived. Black respondents were asked the identical question described above with Latinos in both the 2012 and 2016 American National Election Study administrations. Strikingly similar to Latinos' results, Black Americans predominantly adopted the conditional citizenship policy that would allow undocumented immigrants to receive a pathway toward U.S. citizenship, so long as prerequisites were satisfied. Within the conditional citizenship policy choice response, 65.77% ($x_{1Black} = .6577$)

and 67.19% ($x_{2Black} = .6719$) of African Americans adopted the position in the pre-Trump and Trump eras respectively. Meanwhile regarding the most anti-immigrant stance, deeming undocumented immigrants felons and implementing deportation, only 11.14% of Black respondents adopted the position in 2012 ($x_{1Black} = .1114$). However, in 2016, the support for the felon and deportation policy decreased below the ten percent threshold to 9.82% ($x_{2Black} = .0982$) in 2016, a rather marginal decrease.

However, considering a potential pro-immigrant shift among African Americans is present through assessing combined pro-immigrant responses between the two survey administrations. Including the conditional citizenship policy choice, the second most pro-immigrant response, as an overall pro-immigrant stance with the direct pathway toward US citizenship depicts a clear supermajority of Black respondents holding pro-immigrant stances. 77.11% of respondents adopted a pro-immigrant policy, or a numerical approximation of 770 out of 998 respondents ($x_{1Black} = 770$ $n_{1Black} = 998$). However, combined pro-immigrant policy support further increased to 79.91% in 2016, or approximately 358 of 448 respondents ($x_{2Black} = 358$, $n_{2Black} = 448$). When conducting the two-proportion z-test, the following results are produced:

$$H_0: x_{2Black} - x_{1Black} = 0$$

$$H_a: x_{2Black} - x_{1Black} > 0$$

$$z = -1.17$$

$$p = .121$$

$$p > .05$$

The results above prevent one from rejecting the null hypothesis stating that no difference exists between the pre-Trump and Trump eras. Furthermore, when considering policy choices for undocumented immigrants, no distinguishable difference in support arises between the two eras.

Thus, no suggestion of a pro-immigrant shift can be discerned on such undocumented immigrant policy choices among African American respondents.

Border Security: African Americans

Two different questions regarding border security reveal a pro-immigrant shift regarding border security among Black respondents, even if no statistical tests can appropriately be conducted. The 2012 Collaborative Multiracial Post-Election Survey asked Black respondents if general border security should be increased or decreased to prevent undocumented or illegal immigration, where 49.56% of those surveyed that border security should be “Increased,” just shy of a majority of respondents adopting a neutral to anti-immigrant stance. However, in the 2020 survey administration, a more specific question was posed to respondents asking if one agrees that the federal government should increase spending by 25 billion dollars on border security, including a border wall. However, only 33% of Black respondents generally agreed or leaned toward such an increase. With the inclusion of the border wall policy, arguably Trump’s most signature policy, Black respondents appear to be significantly less supportive of such border security increases when offered a binary response set in the 2020 administration.⁴⁰ While respondents may still support other forms of border security, a clear decline in support for increasing border security is present among African Americans in the era of Trump.

Border Security: Latinos

Utilizing responses from the same survey questions as described above with African Americans, a smaller pro-immigrant portrayal is also evident with Latinos. In the 2012 Collaborative Multiracial Post-Election Survey, 38.87% of Latinos responded that an “Increase”

⁴⁰ The 2020 administration asked respondents if they more closely supported or opposed such an increase in border security funds. The “Oppose” option would also encompass the “Stay the same” and “Decrease” options as seen in the 2012 administration. However, with the two answer choices not adequately encompassed in the 2020 CMPS survey, an observational comparison cannot be appropriately conducted.

in tightening border security to prevent undocumented or illegal immigration should occur. Moreover, the most popular choice was the preference of having border security “Stay the same,” with 45.93% of Latino respondents adopting this most neutral option. However, when asked in 2020 if they more closely agree to increasing spending on border security by twenty-five billion dollars including a border wall, only 32% of Latinos at least generally agreed or supported such an increase. A drop of nearly 7% is considerably smaller compared to African Americans, yet the shift would likely be statistically distinct in the pro-immigrant direction. With support being considerably lower for border security, arguably Trump’s signature immigration stance, a more pro-immigrant shift is portrayed among Latinos in the era of Trump.

Analysis: How is the Democratic coalition affected?

When assessing the survey results and press releases for Asian Americans, only a partial suggestion of a pro-immigrant shift can be concluded. A significant pro-immigrant shift is present within the Congressional Asian Pacific American Caucus press releases, as the group positioned itself more closely as a strongly pro-immigrant caucus in the Trump era. However, the election survey results regarding immigrants’ economic impacts as well as conditional and general citizenship pathways for undocumented immigrants fail to provide results that suggest a pro-immigrant shift. Access to essential goods such as driver’s licenses and health insurance may suggest a pro-immigrant shift, yet one issue domain is insufficient to determine an overall pro-immigrant shift. Such results fail to disprove the initial hypothesis that no pro or anti-immigrant shift has occurred among Asians in the pre-Trump and Trump eras, yet the null hypothesis is clearly not confirmed from the combined interpretive and observational results. Furthermore, such results diverge from Zaller’s longstanding public opinion principles that the public largely adopts opinions of their respective elites when elites are highly polarized on the

issue (Zaller 1231). However, as time progresses, immigration sentiment from the Asian public may converge to the more strongly-pro immigrant sentiment held by Asian congressional leaders.

Regarding such shifts and its effects on the multiracial coalition of the Democratic Party, no additional headwinds arise. The survey results and press releases in both eras yielded results that reaffirmed that Asian Americans clearly held pro-immigrant to strongly-pro immigrant stances in both eras, even if a definitive shift between the eras cannot be established. The reaffirmation of pro-immigrant results suggest that the Democratic Party can continue to adopt pro-immigrant stances without serious risk of alienating or losing Asian- American voters to the Republican Party, which has underwent a strongly anti-immigrant shift in the Trump era.

However, with only a shift among AAPI leaders, a potential disconnect between the public may solidify with the Asian public not shifting toward a strongly pro-immigrant group. Thus, while no serious barriers for winning Asian voters are present from such results, with such a potential disconnect and no major pro-immigrant shift, additional benefits such as increased vote share or partisan affiliation appear unlikely to be attributed to the immigration issue with Asians.

When analyzing the results for African Americans, the results suggest that African Americans underwent a significant pro-immigrant shift between the pre-Trump and Trump eras. With pro-immigrant shifts relating to issues such as conditional citizenship pathways, job threats, and border security, the election surveys thoroughly contrast the null hypothesis that no significant shift in either direction occurred among the Black community. While two areas fail to depict a pro-immigrant shift in impacts on economy and undocumented immigrant policy, significant limitations arise with both questions. The impacts on economy questions true reversal

on question wording from positive to negative may have reasonably influenced the 2016 survey's outcome, and ultimately produced inconclusive results. Furthermore, the undocumented immigrant policy question was a rather unique survey question obtained with only four very distinct policy choices, and over a supermajority of respondents initially adopted a pro-immigrant stance. Regarding the interpretive section's results, while statistical analysis could not be conducted on the Congressional Black Caucus press releases, the increased pronunciation of pro-immigrant press releases also subtly contributes to such a pro-immigrant shift in the Trump era. The caucus clearly increased the salience of the immigration issue through their press releases, and with more pro-immigrant releases being published, a shift toward adopting clearly pro-immigrant stances rather than no defined stance is present.

Overall, the major pro-immigrant shift displayed in both election survey results and caucus press releases is one of the most notable and surprising results from this research. African Americans were the only racial group examined where public and elite opinion harmoniously shifted in the pro-immigrant direction. Furthermore, such results diverge from the existing research highlighting the factors of job competition and socioeconomic status fears that would suggest the difficulty of immigration attitudes shifting positively among African Americans.

Concerning effects on the Democratic multiracial coalition, no barriers have been created as a result of the pro-immigrant shift for the movement. With African American immigration attitudes largely shifting away from Trump's anti-immigrant stances, there is no suggestion that immigration can be a driving factor that pulls Black voters away from the Democratic coalition and into the Republican coalition. Moreover, with immigration increasing in salience which is strongly suggested by this research, an additional barrier for the conservative movement is the true byproduct of such results. However, with mere maximal or unanimous support among

African Americans for the Democratic Party, little benefit in increased vote share appears feasible, yet reinforced loyalty's to the party are in alignment with these results.

Lastly, regarding Latinos, the combined interpretive and observational results mostly suggest a pro-immigrant shift, contrary to the initial hypothesis for this research. The observational results may have evenly split between shifting in a pro-immigrant direction and in a neutral direction. However, two of the issue areas resulting in neutral shifts hold major limitations as previously discussed with African Americans, which were the impacts on economy and undocumented immigrant policy questions.

Additionally, unlike the Congressional Asian Pacific American Caucus results, where such a shift would not have been statistically significant under a more selective .01 threshold, the Congressional Hispanic Caucus underwent a much stronger shift from being in mere direct alignment with a baseline pro-immigrant sentiment to merely a strongly pro-immigrant distinction through the research's interpretive methods, further contributing to an overall pro-immigrant shift in the Trump era.

Regarding impacts on the Democratic coalition, like the other two minority groups examined, no additional barriers arise for the movement according to the results above. With no anti-immigrant shifts present from such results, no evidence exists from the results above that conservatives or Republicans have made significant inroads with the Latino community on the immigration issue. Meanwhile, with the 2020 election results in Florida and Texas, two states with large Latino populations and the far from conclusive election survey results, one cannot appropriately assume the Democratic coalition will grow its Latino base from such shifts on immigration. Such results more strongly suggest that immigration will not negatively impact the coalition and further contribute to the possibility that the Democratic multiracial coalition can at

least maintain its current level of Latino support. However, in future election cycles where such trends in Texas and Florida cease, Latino public opinion may also align itself more closely with such elites, suggesting that the Democratic coalition may reasonably receive increased Latino support in the future.

In offering suggestions for significant variance in results, differences in the racial group's partisan balance is a feasible explanation for such results. In a political climate holding strong polarization, members of their respective parties increasingly sorted toward their party's immigration stances. With nearly 90% of African Americans voting for the Democratic candidate in recent presidential elections and with increasing ideological polarization between Democrats and Republicans (Pew), the group increasingly sorting toward pro-immigrant stances in the Trump era is a feasible expectation. However, with Asians and Latinos being far from monolithic groups and only approximately 65% of both groups voting for Democratic candidates (Roper Center), sorting along partisan lines may have neutralized such pro-immigrant shifts in some immigration issue areas with Asian or Latino Republicans increasingly shifting toward anti-immigrant stances and their Democratic counterparts increasingly adopting pro-immigrant stances.

Limitations & Future Research

A primary limitation that should be emphasized is that these results cannot prove that President Trump caused any shift in immigration attitudes among the three racial minority groups examined. The observational and interpretive approaches utilized to examine the research question are not experimental in nature, eliminating the possibility to prove causation. The selected approach only covers how immigration attitudes shifted in the era of Trump. However,

assessing correlation of immigration attitude shifts through linear regression analysis is possible through this mixed approach.

Furthermore, a key limitation of these results arises from unreleased data from the election surveys and incomplete or inconsistent survey questions within the election surveys utilized in the observational section. 2020 survey results of the National Asian American Survey have yet to be released, which may significantly challenge or reinforce these findings. Additionally, data for the 2020 American National Election Study administration was not obtainable, posing additional limitations on conclusions regarding Latinos and African Americans in multiple issue domains. However, the congressional press releases, party platforms, and Pew survey data cover immigration attitudes, which mitigates this potential criticism.

Additionally, many of the questions utilized in the Pre-Trump era were not re-assessed in the Trump era, hindering the possibility of assessing notable differences in response rates or statistical significance for multiple important survey questions. Many questions were only asked in one election cycle or received very significant alterations or focus within their immigration attitude questions that only allowed for general observations to be conducted. Similar limitations were present in the congressional caucus releases, as pre-Trump era statements of the Freedom Caucus and Trump-era statements of the Congressional Hispanic Conference were unavailable. If such statements were released, especially releases from the Congressional Hispanic Conference, assessing potential shifts and salience among conservative Latino elites would have been an additional assessment of this research.

Regarding future research, an initial goal of this research was to assess what specific demographic factors contributed to potential shifts in immigration sentiment. When beginning

this project, assessing age, nationality, partisan affiliation, gender, income, and immigration status were just some demographic factors that were to be measured in greater depth than what was discussed in some observational subsections. However, polling data was often insufficient to account for essential subcategories or cross-tabulations of groups such as Latino Republicans or Vietnamese Americans. Such data would likely not have yielded representative samples to draw meaningful conclusions regarding such demographics.

Conclusion

The mixed-method approach involving a combination of election survey results and press caucus releases indeed demonstrates that Latinos and African Americans have increasingly become more pro-immigrant through the Trump era. While only partial evidence exists for such a transformation among Asians, the Democratic coalition does not appear to be further damaged as a consequence of such results. Even though immigration has clearly increased in salience among all three racial groups' political elites, public opinion has not shifted harmoniously with the respective caucuses, hindering the ability to identify clear benefits for the Democratic coalition if adopting strongly pro-immigrant stances. These shifts among each racial minority group more largely suggest that Trump's immigration stances have not been the source of potential inroads with racial minorities. However, with President Biden now in office and President Trump the presumed frontrunner for the Republican nomination, will an attitude reversion to the pre-Trump era occur among racial minorities? Will the immigration issue decrease in salience, which was obviously displayed in the Trump era?

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