Pre-Analysis Plan

Pre-registered at OSF on October 19th, 2021
Link available here.

In response to the growing immigrant community, counties all over the US have begun establishing 'Offices of Immigrant Affairs' (OIA). These offices provide valuable services to immigrants such as: helping get immigrants connected to welfare services, teaching English classes, and helping integrate immigrants into the community. Nearly every state in the United States has at least one OIA. We know little, however, about public perceptions towards these offices. Though the goal of these offices is to help immigrants become better integrated into their communities, immigration remains highly controversial. Critics of OIA programs point to them as magnets that will attract further arrivals and worsen the strain on the welfare system. This project aims to characterize public attitudes towards OIAs and the conditions under which the public would support establishing one in their community. Additionally, this project will investigate to what extent establishing anti-immigrant (such as local cooperation with ICE) and pro-immigrant policies (such as establishing an OIA) affects a city's favorability and attractiveness to residents and potential residents.

1. **Data collection. Have any data been collected for this study already?**

No.

2. **Hypothesis. What's the main question being asked or hypothesis being tested in this study?**

RQ1 – How does the public perceive OIAs?

RQ2 – To what extent does the presence of an OIA shape public attitudes towards cities that have OIAs?

RQ3 – What are the consequences of enacting anti/pro-immigrant policies on public attitudes about cities that enact such policies?

H1 – Respondents will be less supportive of an OIA when they serve undocumented immigrants than when they focus on authorized immigrants.

H1a – Democrats will have more favorable views of cities that establish an OIA compared to independents and Republicans.

H1b – Non-whites will have more favorable views of cities that establish OIAs compared to whites.

H1c – Compared to all other race/partisan combinations, White Democrats will have more favorable views of a city that establishes an OIA.

H2 – The presence of an OIA will not negatively affect the city's favorability.

H3 – Respondents will view a city that establishes an OIA more favorably than those that enact anti-immigrant policies aimed at increasing deportations.

H3a – Compared to Republicans, Democrats and independents will view cities that establish an OIA more favorably than cities that cooperate with federal immigration enforcement.
H3b – Compared to whites, Non-whites will view cities that establish an OIA more favorably than cities that cooperate with immigration enforcement.

H3c – Compared to other race/partisan combinations, White Democrats will view cities that establish an OIA more favorably than cities that cooperate with immigration enforcement.

3. Dependent variable. Describe the key dependent variable(s) specifying how they will be measured.

The first survey experiment has one main outcome variable:
DV #1 – Impact of having anti-immigrant or pro-immigrant policies on a city's views and favorability. To empirically measure DV#1, we will ask respondents to 1) give their rating of the city 2) give a rating about to what extent they would recommend the city to a close friend. Both outcomes provide a snapshot about public attitudes towards the city after its new policy.

We will also investigate a second outcome of interest– DV#2 – how the public perceives the enactment of policies that are anti-immigrant. This outcome will rely on qualitative evidence collected from asking respondents to outline their thoughts on the city's policy proposal.

The second survey experiment also has two main outcomes of interest.
DV #1 – Attitudes towards the creation of an OIA. This will be measured by asking respondents 1) to what extent they would support or oppose the creation of an office of immigrant affairs. 2) presented with a potential policy change that would create an office of immigrant affairs + asked to state their attitudes towards the change.

DV #2 – Beliefs about the economic and social impact of offices of immigrant affairs. To measure DV#2, respondents will be asked to what extent they believe the OIA 1) is an economic benefit and 2) would improve the quality of the community. This approach allows us to determine whether respondents are hesitant to support an OIA because of its cost or impact on the community.

4. Conditions. How many and which conditions will participants be assigned to?

In the first survey experiment, all respondents will be introduced to a hypothetical city in the US. This city has traits typically favored by the public – such as great schools, a growing economy, and affordable housing. This city, however, has recently made an important policy change that will affect immigrants. In one version of the treatment, respondents will be informed that the city recently partnered with immigration authorities to increase deportations. In the second treatment option, the city has drafted plans to establish an OIA. The only information about the OIA is that it will help integrate immigrants to the community. Overall, respondents will have equal probability of assignment to one of two groups: treatment (anti-immigrant), treatment (pro-immigrant).

Summary

1) treatment (anti-immigrant) – City will create an OIA to integrate immigrants into the community.

2) treatment (pro-immigrant) – City will partner with immigration enforcement authorities to increase deportations.

To measure the outcome variables, respondents will be asked the following post-treatment questions:

1) Given only the information above, how favorable or unfavorable do you view this city?
2) Do you have any thoughts on the decision by the local leaders to [create an office of immigrant affairs / cooperates with federal immigration enforcement]?
    a. [Textbox]
3) Suppose one of your close friends is relocating for work.
   Given only the earlier information, to what extent would you recommend or discourage them from moving to [city above]?

Respondents will answer questions 1) and 3) with a 5-item likert scale.

In the second survey experiment, respondents will be asked about their attitudes towards creating an OIA in their city. The prompt would outline two common roles carried out by OIA offices: 1) teach English classes 2) help integrate immigrants to the community. The control would only be presented with those two traits. But in the treatment groups, participants will be presented with an additional role carried out by the OIA that will be differentiated for its focus on undocumented immigrants. The third role of an OIA offices will either benefit undocumented immigrants or provide benefits only to authorized immigrants. Thus, the two treatment options are: a) OIA helping undocumented immigrants or b) OIA only providing aid to authorized immigrants. This approach enables us to empirically measure whether support for OIA hinges on the perceived deservingness of the recipient group. Overall, participants will have equal probability of assignment to one of three groups: control, treatment (access undocumented), treatment (no access undocumented).

Summary of Treatment

1) Control – no additional description for OIA
2) Treatment (access undocumented) – OIA providing aid to immigrants regardless of legal status
3) Treatment (no access undocumented) – OIA providing aid only to immigrants that are in the country lawfully.

The main outcomes will be measured using the following questions:

1) To what extent would you support or oppose the creation of an office of immigrant affairs in your city?
2) To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement?
   "The creation of an office of immigrant affairs would <u>benefit the local economy</u>"
3) To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement:
   "The creation of an office of immigrant affairs would <u>improve the quality of the area</u>"

All responses are measured using 5-point likert scale

Following these questions, respondents will also be asked to provide written comments about whether they would support or oppose the establishment of an OIA in their community. Respondents will be given the opportunity to write in a textbox any thoughts and opinions about.

Respondents will also be asked a battery of questions about policy preferences and demographic traits – any of which we may test as potential moderators or mediators.
Pre-treatment:
Demographic variables
Policy Attitudes (abortion/energy/welfare/same-sex marriage)
Prejudice towards liberals, conservatives, immigrants (undocumented and authorized), and political figures.

Between treatments
Party-ID (7-level)
Zipcode
Pol-ID (7-level)
Previous experience moving
Willingness to relocate + factors important for new hometown

Post-treatment
Political sophistication

5. **Analyses. Specify exactly which analyses you will conduct to examine the main question/hypothesis.**

All analysis will use OLS regressions with robust standard errors. We will run similar analyses after subsetting by each variable of interest and/or including interaction effects to investigate moderators – such as partisanship and race – on treatment effects. We also leave open the idea of using a few robustness checks to increase the reliability in the results. First, we may use difference-in-mean t-tests. This can provide a second check on the coefficient estimates from the OLS models. Second, the OLS models may also include covariates of interest (demographic, partisanship, or political ideology) to increase precision. Though adequate randomization would render this last point unnecessary, we leave this option open as an added robustness check if needed.

6. **Outliers and Exclusions. Describe exactly how outliers will be defined and handled, and your precise rule(s) for excluding observations.**

Any respondent that fails the first or second attention check (asked in succession) will be excluded. We also may exclude respondents considered as speeders (completing the survey in less than 1 min).

7. **Sample Size. How many observations will be collected or what will determine sample size?**

Attitudes towards OIA have not been heavily studied in the literature. Using conservative estimates, to find a difference-of-means of .2 with SD of .10, alpha of .05 and assuming 80% power, we would need about 400 respondents per group. Therefore, we plan to collect a sample of 2,000 respondents. After a round of pre-testing, we will re-assess our estimates and adjust the final sample size accordingly. We may conduct more than one round of data collection to provide greater trust in the results and reliability of the conclusions.

8. **Other. Anything else you would like to pre-register?**

(e.g., secondary analyses, variables collected for exploratory purposes, unusual analyses planned?)

The study includes two opportunities for respondents to freely write their opinions. First, respondents are asked to write about their attitudes towards the decision for local leaders to enact a pro/anti-immigrant policy. Second, respondents are invited to outline whether they would support or oppose the creation of an OIA in their city. We leave any analysis and conclusions of this data as exploratory and do not hold any expectations about the kind, length, or attitudes that respondents will write in the textboxes. Nevertheless, we plan to explore the results to outline any correlations or qualitative evidence that could provide greater insight into the mechanisms underpinning attitudes towards OIAs and anti-immigrant policies.

Though partisanship has an important role on policy preferences – especially immigration policy – we leave as exploratory to what extent partisanship (and political ideology) along with economic policy preferences (such as anti-welfare attitudes) and social attitudes (such as anti-immigrant sentiment) affect treatment effects. We plan to subset by these factors to investigate to what extent they serve an influential role in determining support or opposition for OIAs.

To provide a richer story, we may also add additional roles to the description of the OIA in survey experiment 2. This provides us an opportunity to add additional information that can help us unpack the impact of anti/pro-immigrant policies on the outcome variables.

Human Subjects Concerns
There are not any concerns for human subjects in this project. The questionnaire does not include questions that could bring emotional, financial, or legal harm to participants. Further, we paid additional attention on making sure the wording of the conclusions is clear and as unambiguous as possible. The data will be collected using a secure Stanford Qualtrics link and will not contain identifiable information (including IP addresses, emails, etc). The policy consequences of the study are not perceived to be harmful.

9. **Name. Give a title for this AsPredicted pre-registration**

"A study of public attitudes about offices of immigrant affairs"