IMMIGRATION ENFORCEMENT AND LEADER IMAGE:

PRESIDENT TRUMP AND SUPPORT FOR ICE

by

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To Everyone That Has Ever Felt Behind or Left-Behind

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DISSERTATION

Presented to the Faculty of

The University of Texas at Dallas

in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements

for the Degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY IN

POLITICAL SCIENCE

THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT DALLAS

May 2020

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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If a political leader were to speak on immigration enforcement policies, such as President Trump has, would Americans be in more or less favor of immigration enforcement policies? Immigration studies have shown that in-group populations, Americans in this context, perceive out-group populations, immigrants in this context, as threats to their homeland. More specifically, in-group populations can perceive out-group populations as threats to their physical security, culture, or their economic security. With these distinctions in mind, one may ask if Americans support immigration enforcement based on a perceived threat that they experience while thinking about immigrants coming to this country? Using 2019 experimental Cooperative Congressional Election Survey data, we will illustrate which perceived threats may be associated with President Trump's leader image, and more generally, immigrants. How Americans perceive immigration enforcement policies may depend on how policymakers prime and frame issues related immigration and immigration enforcement. Along with explaining variation in attitudes toward immigration enforcement, this research examines support for President Trump and the abolishment of ICE.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF FIGURES

LIST OF TABLES

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

United States immigration policies have fluctuated over time with regard to aspects of how many migrants are admitted into the United States, the procedural steps for admittance, and the origins of potential migrants. Also, the salience of immigration policies with the American public has varied, with some years or decades being dominated by economic concerns, while issues such as international conflict, immigration and health care have been the primary concern of the public in other years (especially when the economy is doing well). Since the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks, immigration enforcement within the United States has become a greater priority for the federal government, as seen by the creation of the Department of Homeland Security and subsequent bureaucracies such as the Immigration Customs and Enforcement (ICE) agency.

Using survey data gathered in the 2018 and 2019 Cooperative Congressional Election Studies (CCES), the goal of this dissertation is to study public attitudes toward immigration enforcement, immigrants, support for President Trump and relationships among these phenomena.[1] YouGov, a leading public opinion research company administers the CCES surveys to representative national samples of the American electorate every year.[2] YouGov administers national internet surveys using a sampling frame that consists of actively recruited participants rather than volunteers. Using the 2018 and 2019 CCES survey data, this dissertation aims to

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[1] https://cces.gov.harvard.edu/

[2] https://today.yougov.com/

understand the causes and consequences of various aspects of immigration. The dissertation utilizes the 2018 pre and post-election CCES data and 2019 data to address questions regarding attitudes towards immigrants, immigration enforcement and support for President Donald Trump. The CCES data facilitates an investigation of how Americans feel about immigration policies, and how particular issues associated with immigration influence support for the president. A survey experiment examines how feelings about Trump interact with perceived cultural, economic and security threats associated with immigration to attitudes towards the Immigration and Customs Enforcement Agency (ICE).

With immigration policies becoming more salient after 9/11, controversy over these policies and agencies associated with their enforcement has increased, being especially scrutinized under the Trump administration. The dissertation will study which Americans support the idea of abolishing the Immigration and Customs Enforcement Agency (ICE), which Americans support President Trump, and how voter's feelings about Trump influence support for ICE. More specifically, although a majority of Americans do not support the abolishment of ICE, 2020 Democratic presidential candidates have put forth the notion of abolishing it. This raises the question: which Americans support abolishing ICE? Furthermore, analyzing various vote choice models, such as the spatial-position, valence, and socio-demographic models will paint a clearer picture regarding how various political, social, and economic issues influence support for President Trump. Are immigration attitudes a particularly powerful predictor of attitudes towards President Trump?

A third major question addressed in this dissertation is whether Americans are influenced by their images of Donald Trump to either approve or disapprove the performance of ICE. Do

Americans citizens feel more or less strongly about support for ICE when Trump endorses the agency based on ICE curbing a potential type of threat immigrants pose? The aim is to analyze the interaction of leader image and perceived cultural, economic and security threats on support for ICE and attitudes towards immigration more generally.

Scholars have performed a large amount of work on immigration and political choice. However, few researchers have analyzed support for immigration enforcement agencies and how the framing of a political leader's image can influence support for a particular agency. Analyzing how Americans perceive an immigration agency through the framing of a political leader is important for addressing perceptions toward immigration policies more generally. That is, particular political leaders could potentially sway audiences to support particular enforcement policies based on the perceived threats associated with immigrants. These threats could be associated with cultural, economic, or physical security. Furthermore, another important aspect of immigration policies in the United States that this dissertation addresses is attitudes towards an immigration enforcement agency such as ICE. Scholars have not addressed support for the institution, which could be potentially used as a proxy for attitudes toward immigrants. Finally, with the 2020 presidential election not far away, this dissertation analyzes various political choice models that provide an overarching view of what are the most important issues that lead to support for, or opposition to, Donald Trump.

Overall, the general questions addressed by this research are concerned with perceptions of ICE, or immigration enforcement, perceptions of President Trump, and their interplay. Addressing these questions is important because of the potential influence that vote choice has on subsequent policy issues such as immigration enforcement. An interesting aspect of this

research is that it will highlight how potential issues interact with political leader image. More specifically, political leaders could excite voters on particular issues such as the economy, national security, immigration or health care. For example, if President Bush had made a statement about national security during his administration, would it be more or less approved of, than say coming from other political leaders? If President Obama, rather than some other political leader, made a statement during his administration about the economy, would it be more or less approved of by Americans citizens? Performing an experiment with regard to analyzing how statements are perceived by the American public is not only of interest to scholars who perform research in this area, but also it is of interest to the American public, more generally. Furthermore, analyzing support for the notion of abolishing ICE is interesting given the salience of the issue and the fact that a majority of Americans do not support the abolishment of ICE. Yet, politicians have still been pushing for policy change in relation to the operations of ICE. Finally, analyzing support for Trump in the context of rival models of electoral choice is of interest to scholars studying voting and election outcomes.

With these ideas in mind, the research performed in this dissertation concentrates on intertwining political leader image and approval with immigration issues, while trying to find leverage that allows scholars to have a deeper understanding of how Americans perceive salient issues facing the country. Although there have been a number of scholarly works performed on attitudes towards President Trump (i.e., Sides et al., 2016; Rothwell, 2016) few researchers have investigated the explanatory power of rival models of his support. Finally, more simply, there has been little scholarly work performed on ICE since its inception.

In the remainder of this prospectus, a discussion of the theoretical and policy importance will be presented for each of the topics covered in the next three papers. That is, the theoretical and policy importance associated with abolish ICE movement, support for President Trump, and support for ICE based on particular statements issued by political leaders. Next, potential contributions of each study will be highlighted as well as various policy implications that may stem from the analyses. Finally, a concluding section provides an overview of the dissertation and the goals associated with this research.

Chapter 2. Abolishing the Immigration and Customs Enforcement Agency

The limited amount of research that has been performed on support for immigration enforcement agencies and the policies that guide their efforts signals the utility of analyzing public support for abolishing ICE. Not only does this dissertation take aim at understanding support for the abolishment of ICE by analyzing potential explanatory variables and their effects on attitude towards ICE, the dissertation also considers public attitudes towards immigrants by using support for enforcement agencies as a proxy. Scholars have employed a variety of dependent variables for measuring attitudes toward immigrants such as immigrant animus (i.e. Leon-McDaniel et al., 2011). More specifically, using Pew research data, Leon-McDaniel et al. (2011) develop a confirmatory factor analysis based on eight questions that measure attitudes toward immigrants. In this research, we analyze attitudes towards immigrants using a slightly different prism by specifically analyzing support for immigration enforcement agencies. Analyses from this viewpoint will provide theoretical as well as policy implications for immigration studies.

An argument put forth in this research is that the factors that help explain variation in general attitudes toward immigrants may be different from those that explain support for the abolish ICE movement. Although the topic is related to immigration, questions more generally about immigrants and questions about immigration enforcement may elicit particular feelings from Americans. That is, many Americans may have positive perceptions toward immigrants generally, but still endorse immigration enforcement policies that limit how many can legally come into the United States. Again, some Americans may have positive perceptions of immigrants, but support enforcement policies that deport illegal immigrants. Thus, the theoretical framework for explaining support for immigration enforcement agencies could be different from frameworks that explain support for immigrants, more generally. A contribution of the present study is that it differentiates between feelings towards immigrants and immigration enforcement agencies. Figure 1.1 illustrates the relationship between support for the abolishment of ICE and attitudes toward immigrants.
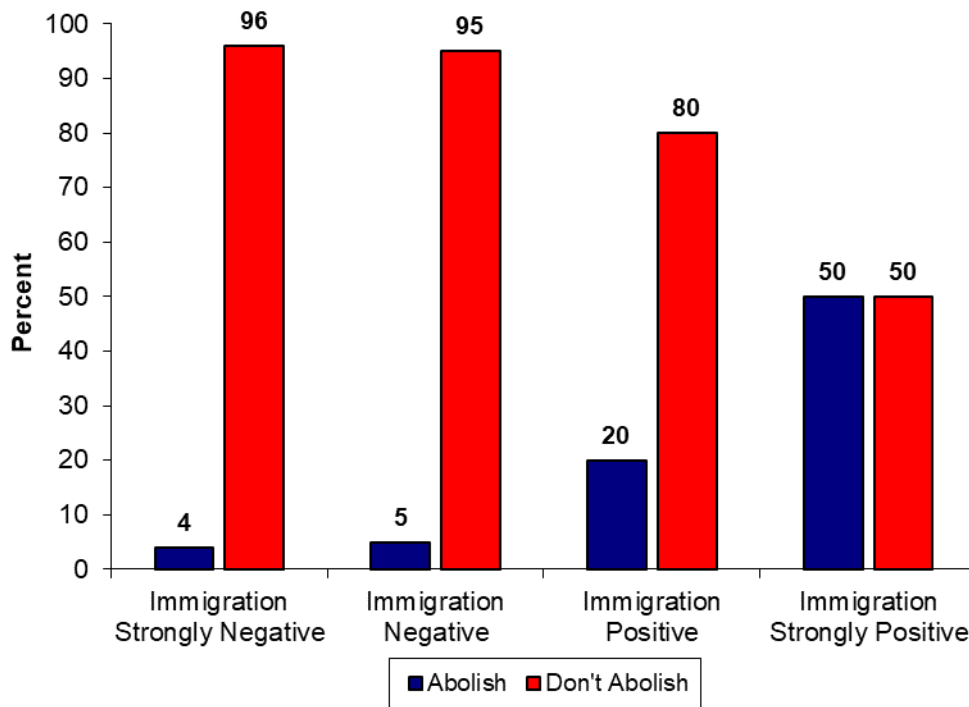
Figure 1.1: Support for ICE and Immigration Attitudes

A more explicit theoretical argument associated with support for ICE will be explained in further detail in the second paper, however, some factors that may influence support for abolishing ICE are racial attitudes, attitudes toward illegal immigrants, evaluations of the performance of the national economy, party identification, liberal-conservative ideological orientations, and socio-demographic characteristics. It is likely that a major explanatory variable influencing support for abolishing ICE is attitudes toward illegal immigrants. That is, Americans attitudes toward immigrants, particularly illegal immigrants, should be a powerful predictor for explaining support for abolishing ICE.

Economic and racial factors are added to the model based on arguments and findings in previous research on immigration. Hainmueller and Hopkins (2014) point out that earlier studies

have shown that wealthier in-group populations could be more concerned about the economic consequences of immigration. Again, people who think the economy is doing well will probably not support the abolishment of ICE because they believe there could be negative economic consequences associated with not enforcing immigration policies. Moreover, Ayers et al. (2009) point out that racial resentment may be a key factor in explaining attitudes toward immigration policies. For example, these authors point to studies that illustrate that U.S. Latinos could be potentially discriminated against based on the stigma associated with illegal Hispanic immigrants. Racial attitudes may factor into how citizens perceive the notion of abolishing ICE as well.

There are potential policy implications regarding the results an analysis showing differentiation between attitudes toward immigrants and attitudes toward immigration enforcement agencies. Just because Americans can feel one way about immigrants does not always mean that it will correlate strongly with feelings toward immigration enforcement. Scholarly understanding of immigration policies is enhanced in this regard as well. That is, researchers can start analyzing support for separate immigration policies that are enforced within the United States and further undercover attitudes towards immigration. Nonetheless, policy-makers should take note that perceptions toward illegal immigrants drive attitudes toward abolishing ICE. This raises the question of which aspects of attitudes toward illegal immigrants affect support for ICE. Specifically, do people who see immigrants as cultural, physical security, and/or economic threats have different attitudes towards ICE? This analysis aims to provide policy-makers with information useful for the development of future immigration policies and immigration-related agencies.

Fundamentally, the approach of examining attitudes toward immigration enforcement agencies rather than just feelings toward immigrants adds value to the immigration literature because attitudes towards ICE have not been thoroughly analyzed. The present study will help uncover how perceptions of immigrants translate into support/opposition for an important agency (ICE) charged with immigration enforcement. Preliminary analyses indicate that the findings of the research will document that, controlling for a variety of other relevant factors, attitudes toward immigrants have strong effects on what Americans think about this agency.

Chapter 3: How Valence and Spatial Issues Affect Support for President Trump

Over the past several decades, an enormous amount of research has been performed on attitudes towards candidates for public office and the determinants of electoral choice. The present study aims to contribute to this literature by identifying factors associated with President Trump's approval in the run-up to the 2020 presidential election. More specifically, the research will analyze how socio-demographic characteristics and salient valence and spatial-position issues affect voters' feelings about him. The present research differs from previous studies by examining the explanatory power of rival vote choice models in the middle of Trump's administration, rather after the next presidential election. In this regard, a number of scholars have analyzed voting in the 2016 presidential election but have not analyzed how factors affecting feelings about Trump may have changed since his election. More specifically, are the same issues that affected attitudes towards him in 2016 still relevant two years into his administration? Has their explanatory power changed? Analyzing rival models of approval for Trump midway through his administration will help answer these questions.

There are two main rival vote choice models addressed in this paper. The first one is associated with an argument Downs (1957) put forth about how voters' make decisions based on where they place themselves on a policy spectrum relative to the potential political candidate available and their policy positions, or a political party's policy position in general. In very general terms, Downs specifies that voters are provided a set of policy positions that range on a continuum based on the ideological position of the policy. Then, voters analyze how close or far away these policy positions are in relation to their own ideological beliefs. Finally, individuals will choose the policy position that is closest to them, or the position they prefer. To provide a critique of this spatial model, Stokes (1963) puts forth an argument relating to "valence issues." Generally, valence issues are issues or policy positions in which virtually all citizens of the United States would agree upon. For example, citizens would agree that they would want a healthy economy with plenty of job opportunities. Since these are one-sided issues, the question then becomes which political party or candidate is most likely to do a better job of addressing the issue.

In more contemporary terms, authors such as Clarke et al., (2004 and 2009) along with Clarke, Kornberg, and Scotto (2009), have further developed a valence politics model that was derived by Stokes' work. As Clarke et al., (2010) state with regard to the British electorate, "The economy, a dominant issue in 2010, is a classic example of a valence issue, with overwhelming percentages of people endorsing vigorous, sustainable economic growth, coupled with low levels of inflation and unemployment...In the realm of valence politics, it is not 'what', but rather 'who', and 'how' that matters" (Pg. 238). In other words, there are particular issues in contemporary U.S. context as well that are considered valence issues such as the economy.

Again, there is overwhelming support from Americans with regard to wanting a prospering economy. However, there are other issues in the United States context which are considered spatial-position issues such as policy differences on health care, policy differences on the environment, and immigration, more generally. Overall the works performed by Clarke et al. (2004 and 2009) and Clarke, Kornberg, and Scotto (2009), help guide us with regard to what could be valence and spatial-position issues in the contemporary U.S. context.

The argument put forth in this research is that spatial-position issues discussed by in Downs' classic book (1957) may influence which candidate gets elected more in the 2020 presidential election, rather than the valence issue model put forth by Stokes (1963) and elaborated by Clarke et al. (2004). However, there are other potential factors we consider in this paper as well. Somewhat redundant to the valence issue model, the Michigan model of voting behavior depicts that party identification affects electoral behavior (Campbell et al., 1960). Also, socio-demographic characteristics of respondents could have an influence on approval for Trump as other researchers have argued (i.e. Cutler, 2002 and Berelson et al., 1954). For example, less educated, white males could be particularly supportive of President Trump, while more educated, Hispanic males could be particularly unsupportive of President Trump.

Moreover, valence issues, issues in which virtually every American agrees upon, may not influence support for Trump the most because of how polarizing his administration's policies are. As indexed by key indicators such as unemployment and GDP growth, the economy has been improving during the Trump administration, leaving the door open for Americans to concentrate on other important issues facing the nation. Furthermore, politicians are more divided on more salient policy issues such as health care and immigration enforcement. In what

manner should the United States address their increasing health care policy concerns? Also, should the United States build a wall at the Southern border of the country in order to try to prevent illegal immigrants from coming into the United States? These are spatial-position issues that divide Americans, with political controversies raging over alternative policy options in fields such as immigration and health care.

Rival models featuring socio-demographic, valence and spatial-issue variables will be examined. Issues of interest pertain to health care, immigration, trade, equality and the state of the economy. Also, the influence of demographic characteristics including age, education, gender, income and race/ethnicity will be examined. Finally, the effects of voters' partisanship will be studied because of the huge literature starting with Campbell et al. (1960) demonstrating that partisan attachments are important determinants of electoral choice in the U.S and elsewhere (e.g., Butler and Stokes, 1969; Clarke, Kornberg and Scotto, 2009; Clarke and McCutcheon, 2009). Preliminary analyses indicate that spatial-position issues may have greater effects on generating support/opposition to President Trump than valence issues associated with the performance of the economy and national security. In an era when the electorate is extremely polarized, spatial-position models may be especially powerful predictors of vote choice. Deeply divisive policy debates surrounding issues such as health care and immigration are likely to be highly salient as the 2020 presidential election approaches. There is evidence that levels of concern with different issues are strongly and differentially associated with attitudes towards the president. In this regard, Figure 1.2 displays data from the 2018 CCES pre-election survey showing that voters emphasizing various issues have very different views of Trump's

performance. While he receives high marks among people concerned about the economy, those who stress issues such as health care, inequality and racism his ratings are very negative.
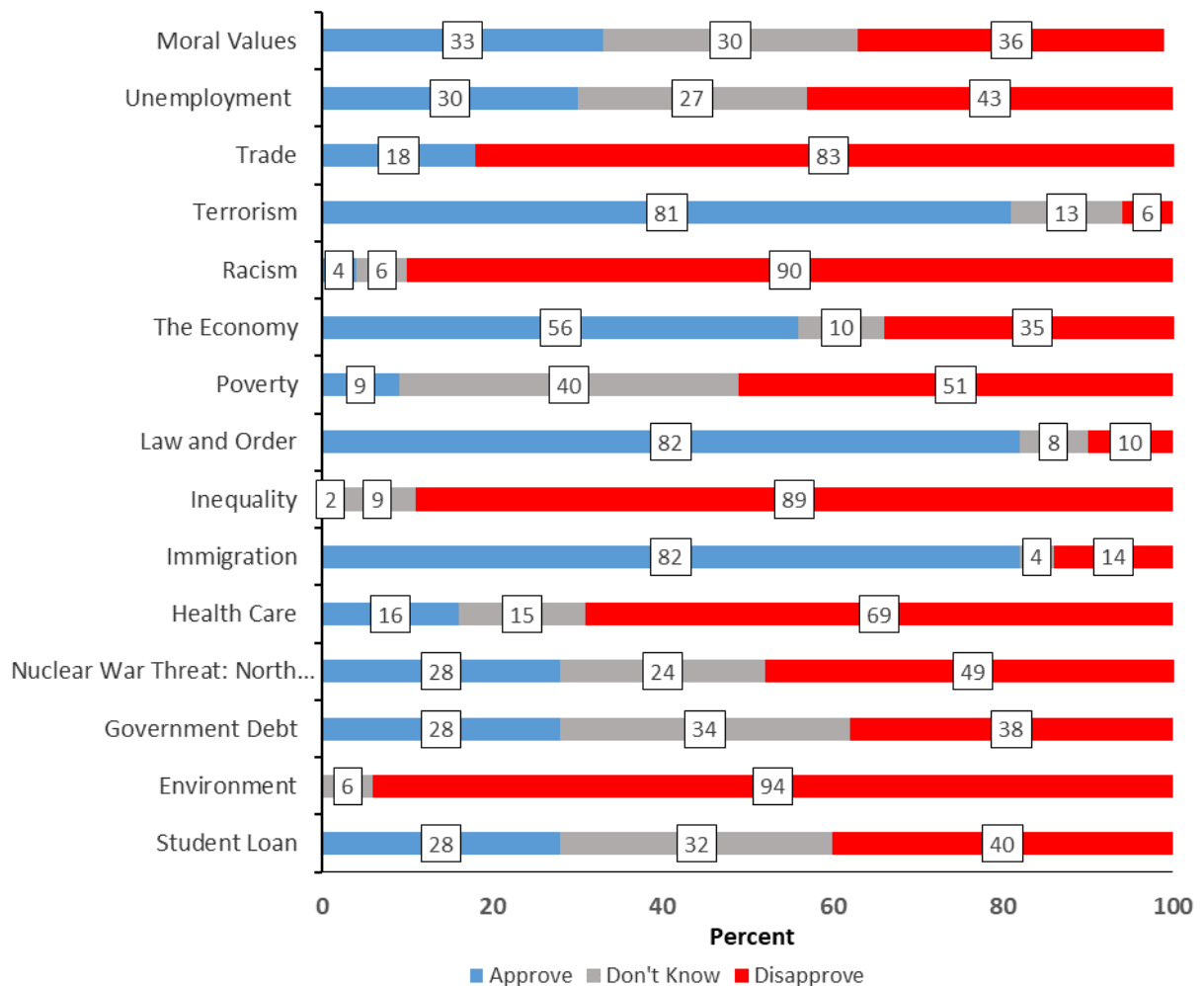
Figure 1.2: Approval of Trump's Performance on Most Important Issues

There may be policy implications associated with the results of this analysis in that the research will help highlight which factors or policies politicians and policy advisors should address. More specifically, the analysis will uncover which issues Americans are particularly

interested in going into the 2020 presidential election and which issues may have an effect on the fate of President Trump and his competitors. Showing which issues Americans support Trump on, or which vote choice models may explain the election outcome in 2020, will be of interest to both scholars and laypersons alike.

Along with developing further theoretical and policy implications, the value added to the vote choice literature from performing this analysis will that this research examines approval for a president in the middle of an administration, a context that is divorced from a presidential election campaign. More generally, the issues that affect President Trump's approval ratings now may not be the same ones that affected voting for him in 2016. Also, the issues that influenced the 2016 presidential election outcome may be different from those that are going to affect the 2020 presidential election. Using survey data that was collected around the 2018 United States midterm elections will help highlight how possible variations in issue agenda will affect presidential approval ratings in an era of deep polarization in the electorate.

Chapter 4: Leader Image, Immigrant Threats, and Support for ICE

Immigration studies have shown that in-group populations, Americans in this context, perceive out-group populations, immigrants in this context, as threats to their homeland (Hainmueller and Hopkins, 2014). More specifically, in-group populations can perceive out-group populations as threats to their physical security (Schweitzer et al., 2005), culture (Louis et al., 2007), or their economic security (Burns and Gimpel, 2000). With these distinctions in mind, one may ask if Americans support immigration enforcement based on a perceived threat that they experience while thinking about immigrants coming to this country? Also, if a political leader were to speak on immigration enforcement policies, such a President Trump has, would

Americans be in more or less favor of immigration enforcement policies? How Americans perceive immigration enforcement policies may depend on how policymakers prime and frame issues related immigration and immigration enforcement.

As stated earlier, there has been a large amount of work performed on the causes and consequences of immigration, however, but there has not been much work on perceptions toward immigration enforcement policies. The first paper of this dissertation aims at addressing who supports ICE, while the third paper concentrates on why Americans potentially support ICE based on perceived threats posed by immigrants. Paper 3 will utilize a survey experiment in the 2019 CCES survey. As mentioned earlier, the survey will involve a representative national sample of the American electorate and it will administered by YouGov. As scholars have pointed out, the number of survey experiments that have been performed by social scientists has increased dramatically in recent years. Druckman et al. (2006) state: "[t]he number and influence of experimental studies is growing rapidly, as political scientists discover ways of using experimental techniques to illuminate political phenomena" (Pg. 627). The appeal of experiments is that they may allow researchers to study causal relationships between variables of interest with greater confidence than is possible with other potential research designs (Inglehart, 1990; Clarke et al., 1999; Ansolabehere et al., 1994).

Druckman et al. (2006) point to the proliferation of experiments in the scholarly literature by identifying three categories of studies: institutional innovation, a simulation or an empirical test, and a randomized trial. The randomization process of assigning questions to a treatment and control groups has allowed scholars to understand particular types of phenomena better by reducing potential biases. Randomized experiments administered in surveys have allowed

scholars to study cause and effect relationships between variables using data gathered with large samples of populations of interest. The number of randomized experiments has increased as well given the creation of different types of survey modes. As, again, Druckman et al. state that, experimental designs can demonstrate how changing one survey item for another could influence classification of respondents, or how respondents answer a particular question. The authors point to how Clarke et al. (1999) demonstrate that substituting an unemployment item for the standard inflation item revealed that significantly fewer respondents could be categorized as post-materialists using Inglehart's influential value schema.

Finally, Druckman et al. (2006) point out how experimental studies related to campaign tactics have changed scholarly understanding of forces affecting electoral choice. Field experiments allow scholars to take advantage of particular political contexts that are impossible for the researcher to control or predict, while also using random assignment to understand the phenomena of interest. Because of the salience of immigration enforcement within the contemporary United States, research reported in the third paper will help to understand what affects support for ICE using a randomized internet survey experiment. Specifically, the experiment will focus on the importance of perceived economic, physical and cultural concerns are for explaining support for ICE.

Priming and framing effects are considered in more depth in this paper. Specifically, priming effects may occur by associating President Trump with potential economic, cultural, and security threats associated with immigrants. However, before diving into priming effects associated with President Trump, we will analyze different measures associated with feelings about Trump. That is, we will analyze image trait images of Trump, i.e. how competent or

trustworthy do you think he is? Next, we examine a basic 0 to 10 scale of feelings or support for Trump. Overall, these different measures will allow us to see the direction and strength of a potential Trump priming effect by analyzes of attitudes toward him. The questions featured on the 2018 CCES that are used to measure images of President Trump are below:

1. ***How well do you think the word 'competent' describes Donald Trump?***

2. ***How well do you think the word 'trustworthy' describes Donald Trump?***

3. ***How well do you think the words 'strong leader' describe Donald Trump?***

4. ***How well do you think the words 'responds to the concerns of people like me' describe Donald Trump?***

5. ***How well do you think the word 'honest' describes Donald Trump?***

6. ***Using a scale that runs from 0 to 10, where 0 means 'strongly dislike' and 10 means 'strongly like', how do you feel about Donald Trump?***

To uncover the interaction between attitudes toward the perceived threats posed by immigration and support for President Trump, the experiment performed in the third paper analyzes how information or cues received from a political leader influence support for particular spatial-position issues. Somewhat similar to Sanders et al. (2008), this analysis uses experimental survey data to analyze how variation in informational cues influences support for spatial-position issues such as immigration policies. Specifically, this paper examines how priming political leaders support for ICE based on how the agency curbs potential threats illegal immigrants pose to Americans due to the framing of the information provided to respondents. The priming aspect of the question provided will be if President Trump or "some people" make a statement of support for ICE. The statement of support will frame whether ICE is making the United States more secure with regard to physical security, economic security, or cultural security. Given

President Trump's divisive rhetoric on various issues and hostile reactions to him in much of the media, will Americans agree or disagree more than they would if someone else made statements with specific framings relating to support for ICE? In this regard it is possible, perhaps likely, that attitudes towards Trump dominate considerations about perceived threats. It is possible that Americans will be more or less likely to support ICE for cultural, economic, or physical security reasons just because President Trump made a statement with regard to how ICE potentially makes the country more secure. Below are the specific questions asked in the experiment, the response categories range from strongly agree to strongly disagree:

1. *President Trump argues that the Immigration and Customs Enforcement Agency (ICE) is necessary to protect the US against illegal immigrants who are criminals or terrorists. Do you agree or disagree?*

2. *Some people argue that the Immigration and Customs Enforcement Agency (ICE) is necessary to protect the US against illegal immigrants who are criminals or terrorists. Do you agree or disagree?*

3. *President Trump argues that the Immigration and Customs Enforcement Agency (ICE) is necessary to protect the US against illegal immigrants who take away jobs from US citizens. Do you agree or disagree?*

4. *Some people argue that the Immigration and Customs Enforcement Agency (ICE) is necessary to protect the US against illegal immigrants who take away jobs from US citizens. Do you agree or disagree?*

5. *President Trump argues that the Immigration and Customs Enforcement Agency (ICE) is necessary to protect the US against illegal immigrants who don't speak English and threaten America's culture and way of life. Do you agree or disagree?*

6. *Some people argue that the Immigration and Customs Enforcement Agency (ICE) is necessary to protect the US against illegal immigrants who don't speak English. Do you agree or disagree?*

7. *The Immigration and Customs Enforcement Agency (ICE) is necessary to protect the US against illegal immigrants. Do you agree or disagree?*

Finally, the framing of the questions allows us to focus on what kinds of threats Americans are most concerned with. That is, are Americans more concerned with the potential

economic, physical security, or cultural threats, or consequences associated with increased immigration and increased numbers of illegal immigrants? Economic threats could be associated with how migrants could potential take away jobs from American citizens and how illegal immigrants do not pay taxes that contribute to the welfare of the nation. Physical security threats could be associated with how immigrants could potentially perform criminal acts that harm American citizens. Cultural threats could be related to how Americans feel about how immigrants affect American norms. The experiment will address which of these potential threats Americans care about the most. I will relate these attitudes towards immigrants as measured by the set of questions we use in papers 1 and 2. In other words, are cultural, economic, or physical security threats more strongly correlated with wanting to deport illegal immigrants?

Overall, the experiment aims to enhance understanding of how the effects of political discourse on public attitudes are conditioned by both the substance and source of that rhetoric. In this regard, the experimental data analyzed in Paper 3 will help one to determine if positive and negative attitudes towards President Trump can sway voters on issues associated with immigration and immigration enforcement. The value added to the scholarly literature is that the paper will bolster knowledge of how voters develop positions on salient issues in the context of deep and corrosive political polarization

Summary and Conclusion

By contributing to the research that has been performed on immigration and leader support, this dissertation aims at understanding properties of various explanatory factors and their potentially interactive properties. Paper 1 analyzes support for the Immigration and Customs Enforcement Agency (ICE). Paper 2 analyzes how immigration attitudes influence

support for President Trump. Finally, Paper 3 performs an experiment that tries to address how voters' attitudes towards President Trump affect how they react to statements related to perceived threats of immigration and support/opposition for ICE. By enhancing understanding of relationships between support/opposition to President Trump, attitudes towards immigrants and the immigration enforcement agency (ICE), the dissertation will contribute to knowledge of the etiology and consequences on public opinion on highly salient and deeply divisive issues that dominate political discourse in contemporary America.

CHAPTER 2

ATTITUDES TOWARD ABOLISHING ICE

Refugee and immigration policies have increasingly gained salience in the United States. Overall, there has been a considerable amount of research performed with regard to refugee and immigration policy outputs, and attitude formations about refugee and immigrant groups in different contexts. More generally, these studies have been performed in democracies which experience inflows of immigrants and refugees from various parts of the world. Surveys and experiments have been conducted to understand the feelings native populations have toward out-group refugees or immigrant populations and have come to different conclusions about how and why perceptions are formed by citizens about immigrants and refugees. Although studies have addressed perceptions toward these groups, they have not addressed perceptions toward bureaucratic institutions within countries that enforce immigration policies.

Immigration and refugee influxes could influence United States security, therefore there are important and interesting questions related to how agencies enforce immigration policies meant to make the country more secure. The interesting aspect of the research question about how individuals form attitudes with regard to United States Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) is that we are viewing immigration perceptions through a different prism in which attitudes formations about these groups of people translate into preferences about immigration enforcement policies or basic support for ICE.[3] That is, the paper goes beyond

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[3] Throughout the rest of the chapter, immigration enforcement will refer to, more generally, enforcement policies that reduce the influx of immigrants rather than policies that could potentially increase their influxes.

analyzing the causes and consequences of preferences toward immigrations and addresses support for ICE. So, this analysis tries to go beyond what just leads to attitude formation in relation to immigrants and refugees, and examines how these attitudes translate into support for bureaucratic institutions that enforce immigration policies. The important aspect of this research is that it addresses a gap in the literature regarding attitude formations toward agencies that enforce immigration policies. To our knowledge, no previous work has addressed how support for ICE is generated. By beginning to address public opinion in relation to ICE, we can begin to understand the frequency of support for certain types of ICE operations.

Previous Literature

Scholarly research has not directly analyzed whether perceptions of immigrants are correlated with the performance of United States Immigration and Customs Enforcement. Nonetheless, the following sections will highlight research related to how perceptions of immigrants have translated into various policy outcomes and decisions throughout countries around the world. More specifically, immigration policies in democratic states, and theories of attitude formation with regard to immigration will be briefly discussed.

The puzzle I am trying to address is, what can potentially explain support for the "Abolish ICE" political movement? That is, after controlling for a host of socio-demographic factors, what accounts for individual's attitudes towards ICE? The literature presented in this section relates to the question I am addressing by identifying existing research on attitude formation and policy outcomes related to immigrants. Overall, by highlighting how individuals form perceptions about immigrants and refugees, we will begin to have a better understanding

for the support of immigration enforcement agencies and what motivates individuals to embrace particular enforcement policies.

Researchers have addressed how citizens form attitudes about immigration and immigrants more generally. Hainmueller and Hopkins (2014) provide a very useful review of studies to help untangle which theoretical frameworks scholars have developed to explain variation in attitudes toward immigration and immigrants. The authors point to political economy and political psychology explanations as being the two leading frameworks that scholars have advanced to help understand immigration attitudes. The political economy argument entails channels in which self-interested concerns about one's own economic and financial well-being influence attitudes toward immigration. That is, labor market competition and fiscal burden considerations effect how citizens feel about immigrants and immigration policies. In terms of labor market competition, individuals will be more likely to form negative opinions about immigrants and immigration policies if they are directly competing with this perceived out-group for jobs, wages, and potential benefits for their families. Fiscal burden considerations refer to the net burden of immigrants in terms of public finance. The effect immigrants have on taxes is a fiscal burden mechanism which leads individuals to form negative opinions about immigrants. Nonetheless, there have been studies conducted, i.e. Espenshade and Calhoun (1993), that provide evidence that economic concerns do not influence attitude formation toward illegal immigrants in California. In sum, there is mixed evidence for how individuals form perceptions about immigrants and refugees in relation to what mechanisms lead to positive or negative evaluations.

Regarding political psychology explanations of attitude formation toward immigrants, cultural and social threats seem to be a motivation for negative evaluations of immigrants. In other words, immigrants are more symbolic threats to a particular native culture, rather than any type of economic or physical threat. Native populations perceive immigrants negatively because, in some cases, they do not speak the same language and do not assimilate into native populations very well. In-group populations have particular standards for national identity, norms, and language, and citizens start to become uncomfortable when these standards start interacting with other ideals from which immigrants are potentially derived. Overall, Hainmueller and Hopkins suggest that immigration attitudes are more strongly correlated with sociotropic concerns about immigrants' influence on a native culture, and less strongly correlated with egocentric and sociotropic economic concerns. By perusing the research on refugee and immigration perceptions, and how individuals form attitudes toward these groups of people, we can develop a plausible theoretical framework with testable hypotheses in relation to explaining variation in attitudes toward immigration enforcement agencies in the United States and elsewhere.

Descriptive Statistics

Providing basic descriptive statistics associated with the data will help give a better idea of the distribution of perceptions associated with the Abolish ICE movement. Displaying the characteristics of the data will provide an impetus for aspects of the theoretical argument. The following section will illustrate the distribution of survey respondents who want to abolish ICE. Also, this section will demonstrate the distribution of the respondents who want to abolish ICE with regard to basic socio-demographic characteristics, immigration perceptions, economic

evaluations and racial attitudes. To begin, Figure 2.1 illustrates about 20 percent of Americans support the abolishment of ICE and 80 percent are opposed to the abolishment of ICE.
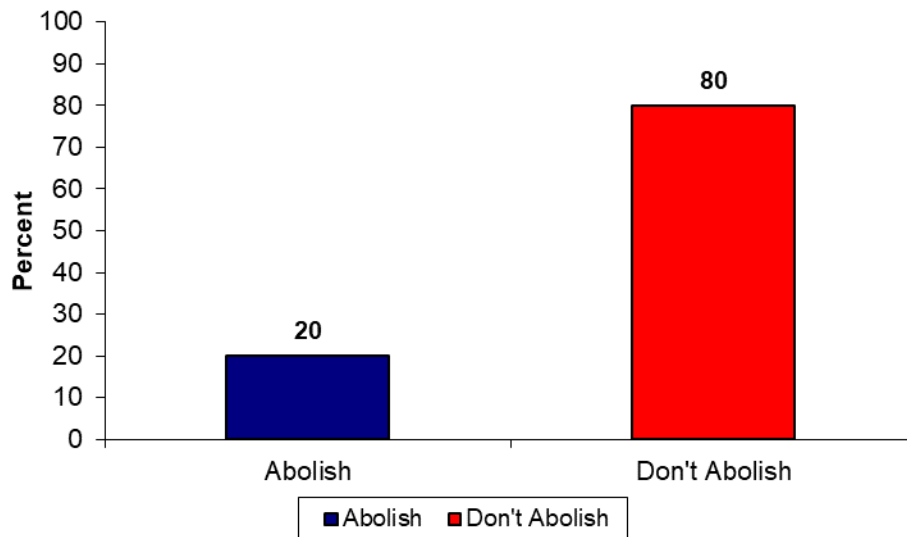
Figure 2.1: 2018 Support for ICE

Perhaps, what is more telling are bivariate distributions with regard to gender, age, immigration attitudes, and economic perceptions in relation to abolishing ICE. With regard to gender, women are more likely to support the abolishment of ICE. Higher percentages of men do not support the abolishment of ICE. Furthermore, younger individuals are more likely to support the abolishment of ICE, however, just 31 percent of individuals that range from the ages 18 to 24, support eliminating ICE. Individuals who are 65 years or older exhibit lower support for the abolishment of ICE. Fifteen percent of people who are 65 or older support eliminating ICE, while 85 percent of those in this group are opposed to the abolishment of ICE. Overall, older Americans exhibit lower levels of support for abolishing ICE.
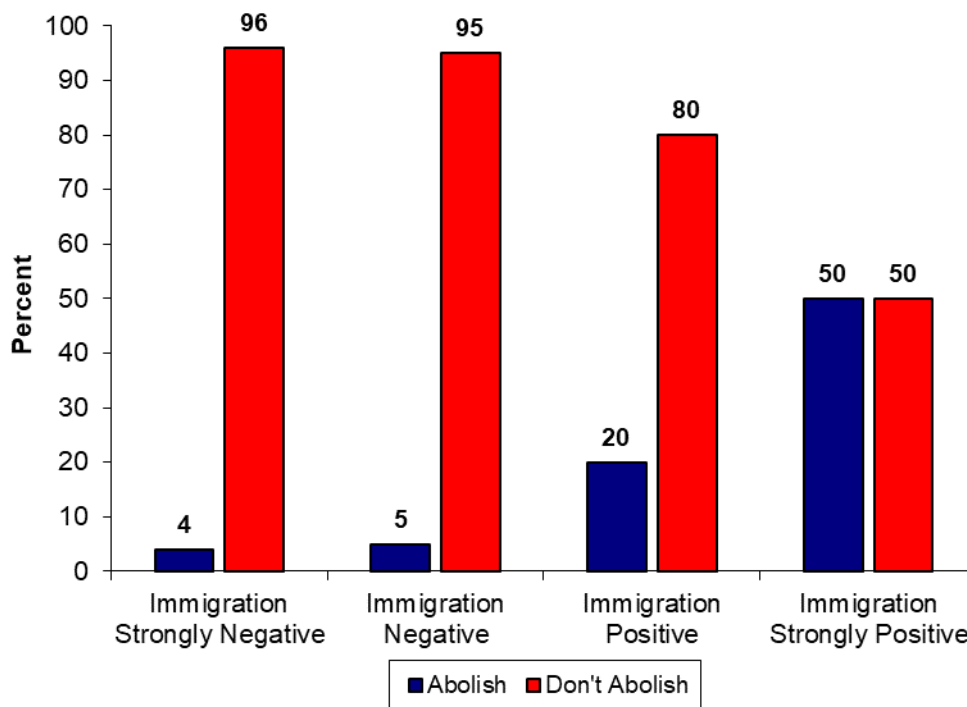
Figure 2.2: Support for ICE and Immigration Attitudes

Immigration and economic perceptions reveal the greatest percentage changes from

category to category. Figure 2.2 illustrates support for ICE by immigration attitudes. As shown,

only 4 percent of those with strongly negative perceptions of immigrants support the abolishment

of ICE, while 96 percent do not support the abolishment of ICE. In contrast, fifty percent of

those with strongly positive perceptions of immigrants support the abolishment of ICE, while 50

percent do not. Figure 2.3 depicts attitudes toward support for ICE by economic evaluations.

Economic perceptions reveal a somewhat similar pattern of variation. Only 6 percent of those

with strongly positive perceptions of the economy support getting rid of ICE, while 94 percent

do not. Forty percent of those with strongly negative perceptions of the economy support the

abolishment of ICE, while 60 percent of those with strongly negative perceptions are opposed.

In sum, it seems that economic and immigrant perceptions elicit responses that are much more varied. This could be an indication that these particular variables drive support for the abolishment of ICE.
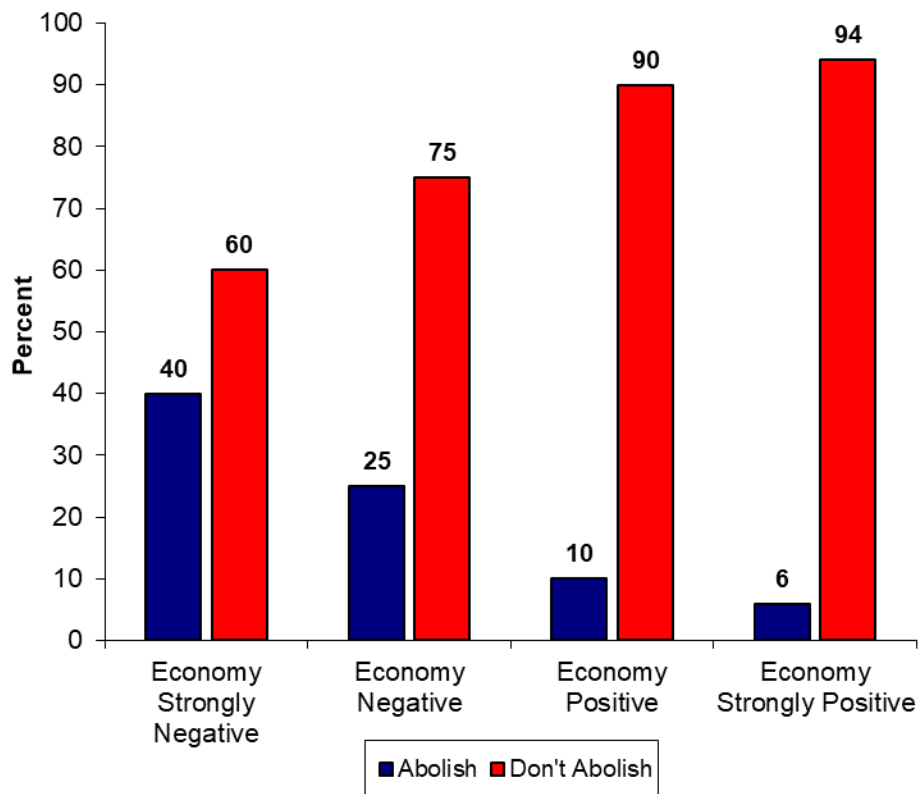
Figure 2.3: Support for ICE and Economic Evaluations

Finally, party identification and whether religion is important to a particular respondent offer more insight into support for the abolishment of ICE. About 4 percent of those who identify as Republican support getting rid of ICE, whereas around 96 percent of Republicans do not. As for Democrats, about 35 percent of those who identify with this party support the abolishment of ICE, while 65 percent do not. Religiosity and support for ICE exhibits variation among respondents as well. That is, about 30 percent of those who are categorized as viewing religion

not important at all support the abolishment of ICE, while 70 percent do not. Finally, approximately 13 percent of those individuals who believe religion is very important support eliminating ICE, but 87 percent do not.

Theoretical Framework and Hypotheses

Theorizing what influences attitudes toward the United States Immigration Customs and Enforcement is similar to forming arguments about immigrants, more generally. The following theoretical approach will take a more abstract approach to the theories of realistic and symbolic threats in association to immigrants. That is, we will consider analyzing perceptions towards immigrants in general, rather than whether they are a symbolic or realistic threat. As alluded to in the literature review, there are several potential perceptions of immigrants based on different arguments pertaining to what type of threat they could present to the country, or any particular in-group. Regardless of the argument, the end result produces either negative or positive attitudes toward immigrants. Therefore, it would be plausible to argue that varying perceptions of immigrants will lead to varying perceptions toward an agency that enforces immigration policies. The causality is pretty clear as well. Perceptions of immigrants influence support for an agency that enforces immigration policies. One would find it difficult to argue that support for the agency influences support for immigrants.

Hainmueller and Hopkins (2014) point out several important aspects with regard to how individuals form perceptions about immigrants, however, they do not identify any studies that translate immigration perceptions into support for agencies that enforce immigration policies. The casual mechanism that translates attitudes towards immigrants into support for ICE is the rational behavior of individual respondents. That is, those who are unfriendly towards

immigrants will be more likely to support ICE because of their ability to potentially remove or alleviate the influx of immigrants. Regardless of why a respondent has negative perceptions about immigrants, ICE is a potential avenue by which the particular respondent could see their issue with immigrants addressed. More generally, ICE has the power to enforce federal immigrations and custom laws and it can perform investigations, arrests, and deportation of aliens within or that come to the United States. These considerations are interesting given that the many illegal aliens have gained entrance to the United States legally, but have failed to renew their visas or basic immigration documentation. Nonetheless, those who are unfavorable towards immigrants could potentially rely on the potential investigations, arrests, and deportation of immigrants in order to act upon their negative attitudes toward these groups.

Although this analysis is built around immigration and support for ICE, there are alternative explanations for why a particular respondent might support ICE or favor its abolishment. These explanations are concerned with the basic ideology of the respondent, their perceptions of the economy, how tolerant they are of other races, and how important religion is to them. As Hainmueller and Hopkins point out, "On the economic side, existing research has connected immigration attitudes with general economic conditions, a finding that is consistent with claims that immigration attitudes are sociotropic and economic in orientation" (Pg. 242). Therefore, we argue that perceptions of the state of the economy influence support for the abolishment of ICE. Moreover, racial attitudes could influence support for the abolishment of ICE or support for its retention. Supporting activities of ICE, more generally, could be derived from racial attitudes toward particular groups. Furthermore, derived more from the "clash of the civilizations" argument, we argue that the importance of religion for a respondent affects support

29

for ICE or the abolishment of the agency. Finally, other things equal, general liberal and conservative ideological orientations should be correlated with attitudes towards abolishment of ICE, with liberals being more favorable. The following section will go through the hypotheses associated with support for the abolishment of ICE and their associated theoretical expectations.

Immigration Perceptions and ICE

Regarding the immigrant perception framework argument, I put forth the Hypothesis 1:

H1: *Those who are more likely to perceive immigrants positively, are more likely to support the abolishment of ICE.*

That is, respondents who view immigrants positively are less likely to see the necessity for an immigration enforcement agency. Conversely, those who perceive immigrants negatively, are less likely to support the abolishment of ICE. Overall, the mechanism that leads to less support for the abolishment of ICE is that it is rational for respondents who do not perceive immigrants favorably to support the activities of ICE. These activities include the investigation, arrests, and deportation of immigrants. Overall, those who perceive immigrants negatively will likely support ICE because these respondents know that ICE could help potentially alleviate any threat associated with immigration. These theoretical expectations are derived from the realistic and symbolic threat arguments discussed in Hainmueller and Hopkins (2014). Those respondents who see immigrants positively are more likely to abolish ICE because they do not see the need for the agency. More generally, these respondents could hold the beliefs that ICE is a waste of government spending.

Sociotropic Economic Perceptions and ICE

Regarding the economic perception framework argument, I put forth Hypothesis 2:

H2: *Those who are more likely to perceive the economy as doing well, are less likely to support the abolishment of ICE.*

That is, respondents who think positively about the nation's economy will less likely support abolishing ICE. Conversely, those who judge the nation's economy negatively will more likely support getting rid of ICE. The basic logic behind this is derived somewhat from an egocentric argument. Hainmueller and Hopkins (2014) point out, previous studies have shown that wealthier in-group populations could be more concerned about the economic consequences of immigration, and document that the wealthier individuals are less likely to support immigration or more immigrants coming into the nation. A similar logic can apply here as well. Those respondents who think the economy is doing well will probably support the abolishment of ICE because they believe there could be negative fiscal consequences associated with failing to enforce immigration policies. Those who think the economy is doing poorly are less likely to support the abolishment of ICE because of they think immigration, immigration policies, and immigration enforcement are pressing issues.

Racial Perceptions and ICE

Regarding the racial perception framework argument, I put forth the Hypothesis 3:

H3: *Those who have a higher tolerance of other races, are more likely to support the abolishment of ICE.*

That is, respondents who think positively about other races and ethnicities are will more likely support the abolishment of ICE. In contrast, those who have negative racial attitudes will less likely support eliminating ICE. As Ayers et al (2009) point out, racial resentment may be a key factor in explaining attitudes toward immigration policies. The basic argument is that there is a

potential stigma associated with racial groups who are associated with groups that are viewed negatively. For example, the authors point to studies that illustrate that U.S. Latinos could be potentially discriminated against based on the stigma associated with illegal Hispanic immigrants. Therefore, racial prejudice may play a role in explaining support for ICE. Respondents who hold less tolerance for other races will be more likely to support immigration enforcement because these individuals will be more averse to interacting with the various ethnicities in a potential immigration population. Those who are less averse to interacting with other ethnicities will be more likely to support the abolishment of ICE because these respondents do not see the necessity for immigration enforcement policies.

Religious Importance and ICE

Regarding the religiosity framework argument, I put forth the Hypothesis 4:

H4: ***Those who are more religious, are more likely to support the abolishment of ICE.***

That is, those who identify as being more religious, will be more likely to support the abolishment of ICE. Conversely, those who identify as being less religious, will be less likely to support the abolishment of ICE. As Knoll (2009) notes, hose individuals who attend more religious services, are more likely to support liberal immigration policy reforms. A basic argument for why more religious individuals are more likely to support the abolishment of ICE is that they sympathize with immigrants, especially those with whom they share similar beliefs. Respondents who are less religious will likely not sympathize as much with liberal immigration policy reforms than will those who are more religious. Therefore, these individuals will be less likely to support the abolishment of ICE. More generally, scholars have shown how religion has

played a role in immigration policies in earlier eras, therefore, factoring religiosity into the equation is not implausible.

Ideological Disposition and ICE

Regarding the ideological disposition framework argument, I put forth the Hypothesis 5:

H5: *Those who are more liberal, are more likely to support the abolishment of ICE.*

That is, those who identify as being more liberal with regard to ideological beliefs, will be more likely to support the abolishment of ICE. In contrast, those who identify as being more conservative, will be less likely to support the abolishment of ICE. As Citrin et al (1990) state with regard to immigration policies, "To the extent these symbols dominate discussion of policies bearing on immigration or cultural diversity, ideological and partisan predispositions are likely to be engaged…with liberals and Democrats opposing conservatives and Republicans" (Pg. 1127). In other words, ideology should influence support for the institution of ICE. Liberals are more likely to support immigration policies that allow for the influx of immigrants, while conservatives are more likely to support the restriction of immigration inflows into the country.

Ideology, Party Identification and ICE

Regarding ideology and partisanship, I put forth the Hypothesis 6:

H6: *Those who identify as a Republican, will be less likely to support the abolishment of ICE.*

That is, the interaction between being more liberal or conservative and party identification, should have an effect on support for ICE. More Republican-conservatives should hold stronger beliefs toward immigration policies, and vice-versa for Democrat-liberals, therefore, should be less likely to support the abolishment of ICE than just an individual who just identifies as a

conservative. The basic logic behind Hypothesis 6, is that, the effect with regard to support of ICE should be stronger among more politically polarized respondents.

Ideological Disposition, Religiosity and ICE

Regarding an ideological-religiosity framework argument, I put forth the Hypothesis 7:

H7: ***Those who are more conservative and religious, will be less likely to support the abolishment of ICE.***

That is, the interaction between being more liberal or conservative and religiosity should influence support for ICE. As McDaniel et al (2011) suggestively illustrate, Christian Nationalism seems to be a predictor of immigration attitudes, or specifically, immigrant animus. That is, those who believe that there is a hierarchy of nations based on religions are more likely to hold negative attitudes toward immigrants. In a similar framework of the clash of values, we expect that religious-conservatives will be less likely to support the abolishment of ICE because the activities of ICE help reduce any clash in values. In contrast, those are less religious and more liberal, will be more likely to support the abolishment of ICE. Although these respondents are less religious, they are more supportive of immigration policies that allow an influx of immigrants.

Research Design

Data

To investigate which factors influences attitudes towards support for ICE and/or immigration enforcement in general, we use survey data from the 2018 Cooperative Congressional Election Study. The total number of respondents is 1000, with respondents selected from every region of the United States.

Dependent Variable

The dependent variable in the following analysis is support for the abolishment of ICE distinguished by categorical responses. Respondents in the 2018 CCES were asked whether they strongly (dis)agreed with abolishing ICE. The question provided a five-point ordinal ranking for respondents in which higher values reported by respondents indicated more support for the abolishment of ICE. The dependent variable specifically asked whether: "The Immigration and Customs Enforcement Agency (ICE) should be abolished," with 5 indicating strong agreement with this statement and 1 indicating strong disagreement. More specifically, the variable is coded as 5 for "Strongly Agree" and 4 for "Agree" with regard to support for abolishing ICE. 3 indicates "Neither good nor bad." 2 and 1 refer to "Disagree" and "Strongly Disagree," respectively, in relation to support for abolishing ICE.

Independent Variables

The main independent variables in the following analyses measure various immigration, racial, religious and economic perceptions and beliefs. I create confirmatory factor analysis scores regarding positive or negative discernments about illegal immigrants. Also, I use factor scores for racial and economic perceptions. Finally, I use a strength of importance question to determine how important a person's own religion is to them. Other key independent variables to note that are used in the following statistical models are a measure for how liberal or conservative a respondent is, and the party with which a respondent identifies.

I employ a confirmatory factor analysis to help depict attitudes toward illegal immigrants within the United States. In sum, there are six indictors I use to create the factor scores for attitudes toward illegal immigrants. The indictors are based on questions pertaining to how

illegal immigrants influence the physical security of Americans, whether there should be a wall built on the border of the United States to keep illegal immigrants out of the country, whether illegal immigrants should be eligible for government services, whether illegal immigrants take away jobs from Americans, and whether immigrants threaten American culture. The questions are measured on an ordinal scale regarding the strength of approval or disapproval of these particular statements. For example, does a respondent strongly agree, agree, doesn't know, disagree, or strongly disagree that most illegal immigrants should be allowed to have access to governmental services such as health care benefits. High scores produced by the factor analysis indicate negative attitudes toward immigrants, whereas low scores indicate positive attitudes toward immigrants.[4]

The other independent variables in the model include two factors analysis scores relating to judgments about the economy and racial attitudes, and two variables that measure a respondent's party affiliation and their level of liberal or conservatism. Higher factors scores in regard to evaluations of the economy indicate that a respondent thinks the economy is doing well. Higher factor scores in relation to racial attitudes indicate that a respondent is more tolerant of other races and ethnicities. Higher values on the liberal-conservative measure indicate that a respondent is more conservative. Finally, there are dummy variables indicating the party with which a respondent identifies. In total, there are several key independent variables that we predict will explain most the variation with regard to attitudes toward ICE, and immigration

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[4] I use a weighted least squares estimator with adding co-variances of particular variables to estimate the factors scores. The root mean squared error (RMSEA) suggests that the model has a strong fit with the data.

enforcement more generally. We analyze interactions among some of these independent variables as well.

Control Variables

A number of control variables are included in the mode. These include annual family income, region of residence, educational level, race/ethnicity, age and gender. Higher values on family income, educational level, and age indicate that these respondents are wealthier, more well educated, and older, respectively. Remaining control variables are dummy variables.

Interaction Effects

There will be two main models in which the different interaction terms are utilized. The first model interacts how liberal or conservative one is with being a Republican. The reasoning for interacting these variables is that more conservative-Republicans are likely to support ICE. That is, more conservative-Republicans will be less likely to support the abolishment of ICE. As a Republican becomes more conservative, their support for an agency that is supposed to keep Americans more secure increases. Therefore, as a Republican respondent's conservativism increases, so will their own support for ICE. The second model interacts how liberal or conservative a respondent is with how important they think religion is. The reasoning behind this model is that more religious-conservatives are likely to support ICE. As a religious individual becomes more conservative, he/she is more likely to support an agency that does not threaten their culture.

Methodology

The data were gathered by the CCES in 2018. I utilize ordered and binomial logit models for the analyses to address which factors influence support for the abolishment of ICE. Overall,

there are two models with two different interaction terms featured in each. To analyze the significant interactions of the interaction terms, we retreat to using a binomial logit model that indicates whether a respondent has indicated support for ICE. The religious-conservative model features a one-tail test which implies that more religious individuals will never have less of an effect on support for ICE than less religious individuals. The Republican-conservative model also uses a one-tail test to identify the significant interactions. Finally, the two main models are ordered logit models due to the dependent variable ranging from 1 to 5 on the basis of strength of support for ICE. Higher levels of the dependent variable indicate stronger support to abolish ICE.

Statistical Results

The results of the statistical models provide some support for the arguments presented above, but not support for the main immigration hypothesis. That is, positive attitudes toward immigrants lead to support to abolish ICE and more liberal individuals support abolishing ICE. Those who have positive perceptions about immigrants are more likely to support the abolishment of ICE. Moreover, those who think the economy is not performing well, are more likely to support the abolishment of ICE. Positive racial attitudes lead to support for abolishing ICE. Finally, religious importance does not seem to have an effect on support for abolishing ICE until it is interacted with political ideology.

Regarding the control variables, younger people, less wealthy persons, and the less well educated all seem to support for the abolishment of ICE. Also, females are more likely to support getting rid of the agency. Results for the control variables do not come as a surprise. There is little support for the Republican-conservative model due to the variable being insignificant in all the models and there is more support for the religious-conservative model due to the variable

being significant in the ordered logit model. Overall the results suggest that perceptions toward immigrants, perceptions about the economy, racial attitudes, and how liberal or conservative a respondent is, all influence support for ICE.

The results displayed in Table 2.1 indicate that, not surprisingly, racial prejudice and negative immigration sentiments are predictors of immigration enforcement agency support. Moreover, those who perceive the economy as doing well, will be less likely to support the abolishment of ICE. The sociotropic economic argument that was discussed above holds here, in that those who perceive the economy as doing well are more likely to support ICE because of the potential fiscal consequences of immigration if immigration policies are not enforced. Furthermore, liberals are more likely to support the abolishment of ICE, on par with their support for more liberal immigration policy reforms.

Table 2.1: Ordered Logit Models of Probability of Strongly Supporting the Abolishment of ICE

	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3
Predictors			
Immigration	-0.693***	-0.706***	-0.682***
	(0.112)	(0.112)	(0.112)
Dem PID	0.0821	0.107	0.0536
	(0.159)	(0.160)	(0.160)
Rep PID	-0.286	0.508	-0.316*
	(0.191)	(0.670)	(0.192)
Other PID	0.132	0.126	0.146
	(0.333)	(0.332)	(0.333)
Age	0.0177***	0.0177***	0.0181***
	(0.00371)	(0.00371)	(0.00373)
East	-0.104	-0.0918	-0.0988
	(0.198)	(0.198)	(0.198)
South	-0.0876	-0.0909	-0.112
	(0.170)	(0.170)	(0.170)
West	0.126	0.133	0.121
	(0.194)	(0.194)	(0.195)

Table 2.1 continued

Family Income	-0.0332	-0.0332	-0.0367
	(0.0230)	(0.0230)	(0.0230)
Education	-0.269***	-0.263***	-0.278***
	(0.0659)	(0.0661)	(0.0662)
Black	0.0301	0.0336	0.0685
	(0.209)	(0.209)	(0.209)
Hispanic	-0.0541	-0.0789	-0.00819
	(0.228)	(0.229)	(0.228)
Asian	0.402	0.398	0.417
	(0.295)	(0.295)	(0.294)
Other Race	0.127	0.113	0.142
	(0.365)	(0.365)	(0.368)
Gender	-0.537***	-0.536***	-0.538***
	(0.131)	(0.131)	(0.131)
Libcon	-0.204***	-0.173***	-0.471***
	(0.0555)	(0.0606)	(0.117)
Economy	-0.377***	-0.379***	-0.385***
	(0.0841)	(0.0841)	(0.0842)
Religion	0.0903	0.0885	-0.244*
	(0.0608)	(0.0608)	(0.142)
Race Attitude	0.750***	0.745***	0.739***
	(0.0997)	(0.0996)	(0.0999)
Rep*Libcon		-0.155	
		(0.126)	
Reli*Libcon			0.0905***
			(0.0348)
Observations	1,000	1,000	1,000

Standard errors in parentheses
*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

With regard to the religious-conservative model and its associated predictor variable, the

interaction between religiosity and a respondent's ideology is statistically significant. However,

the term behaves opposite as expected. That is, more religious-conservatives are more likely to

support the abolishment of ICE, while less religious-liberal people are less likely to support the

abolishment of ICE. These results highlight how the salience of religion and ideology in relation

40

to whether this subset of respondents support immigration agencies. Finally, the interaction between party identification and ideology is insignificant, suggesting that more polarized respondents do not have an addition effect beyond just ideology or party identification alone.

However, the interaction effect results offered in the ordered logit models may be misleading. As Ai and Norton (2003) point out, the interaction effect varies across observations and statistical significance cannot be determined from one t-test associated with the effect. Rather, the statistical significance of each case will need to be determined when working with non-linear models. In their model, the dependent variable is a dummy variable measuring whether a respondent supports ICE. Using one-tail tests for both the religious-conservative and conservative-Republican models, we find some support for the interaction effects. With regard to the conservative-Republican model, Figure 2.4 illustrates that there is a statistically significant effect for only 8 individuals associated with not supporting the abolishment of ICE. All other 992 are statistically insignificant in this regard, however, there is support for the conservative-Republican model.
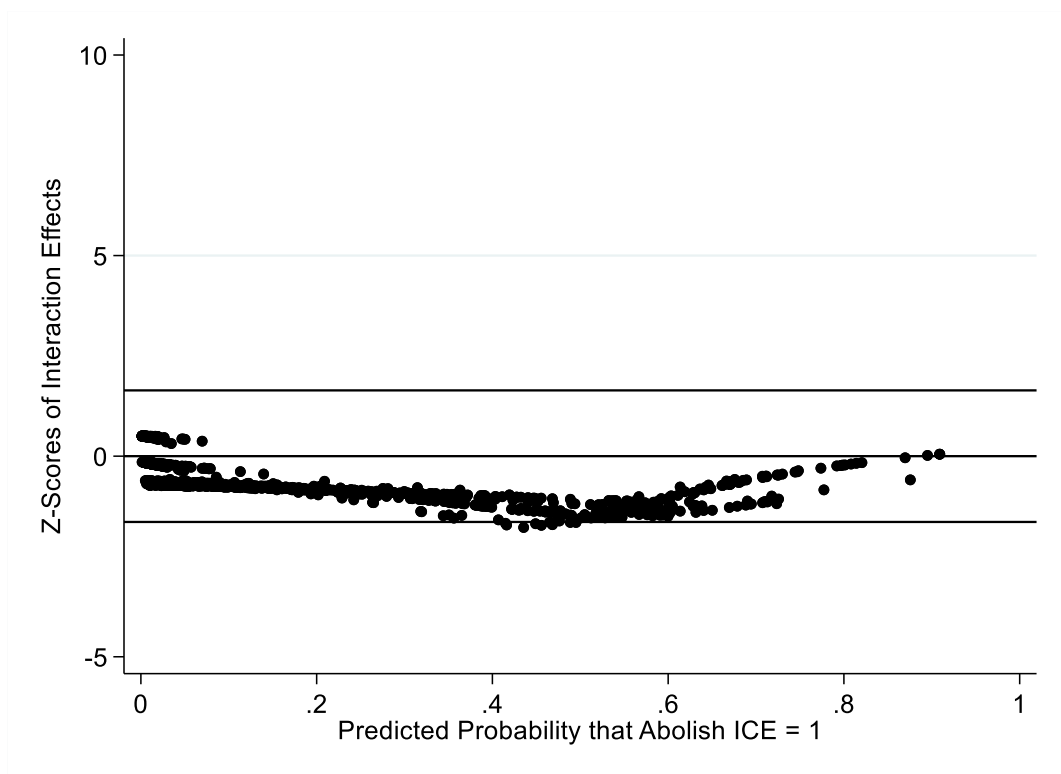
Figure 2.4: Z-Scores of Republican X Ideology after Logit

Regarding the religious-conservative model, Figure 2.5 illustrates that 36 respondents have a statistically significant effect correlated with supporting the abolishment of ICE, opposite of what was hypothesized. When analyzing Figures.4 and 5, one can see the number of respondents that are deemed to be statistically significant by looking at the regions above and below the outer lines. The areas above and below the outer lines indicate these respondents are either positively or negatively statistically significant with regard to the interaction term.
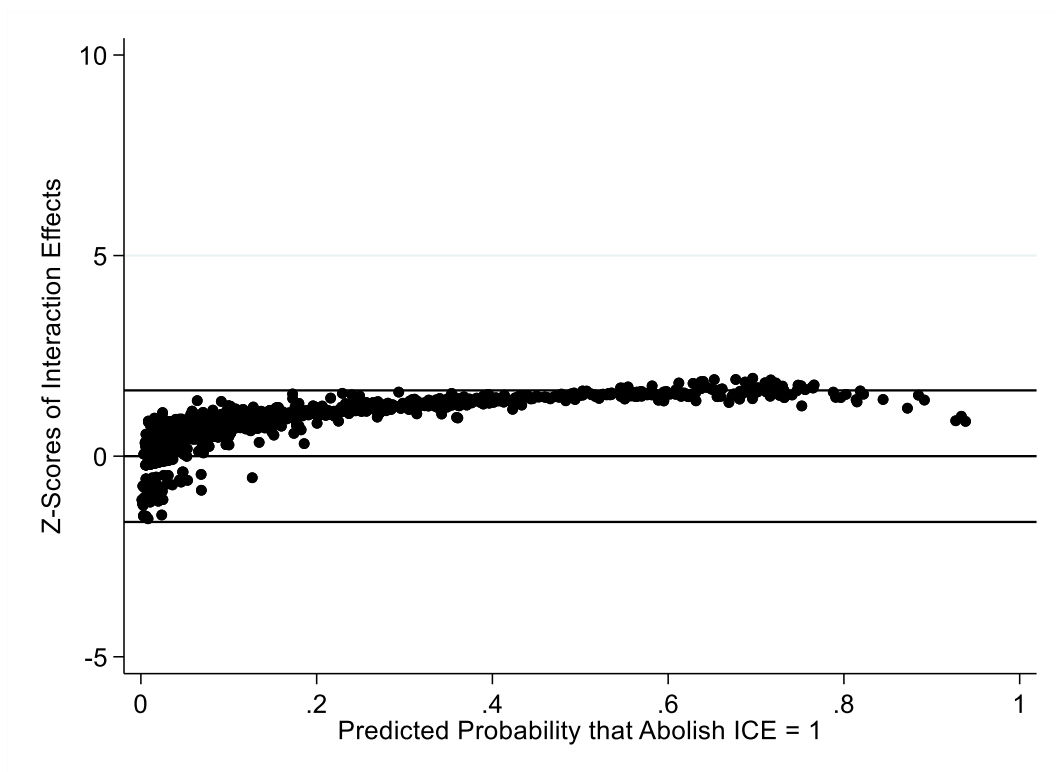
Figure 2.5: Z-Scores of Religiosity X Ideology after Logit

Substantive Effects

The following figures show the predicted probabilities with regard to the key independent variables that are significant. That is, the figures show the probability of strongly supporting the abolishment of ICE when the variable of interest is shifted from its lowest value to its highest, while holding all other variables at their means. Figure 2.6 shows the probability of a respondent's support for the abolishment of ICE as any particular respondent becomes increasingly conservative. There is about a .04 unit decrease in the probability of supporting the abolishment of ICE as a respondent shifts from a full liberal to a full conservative.
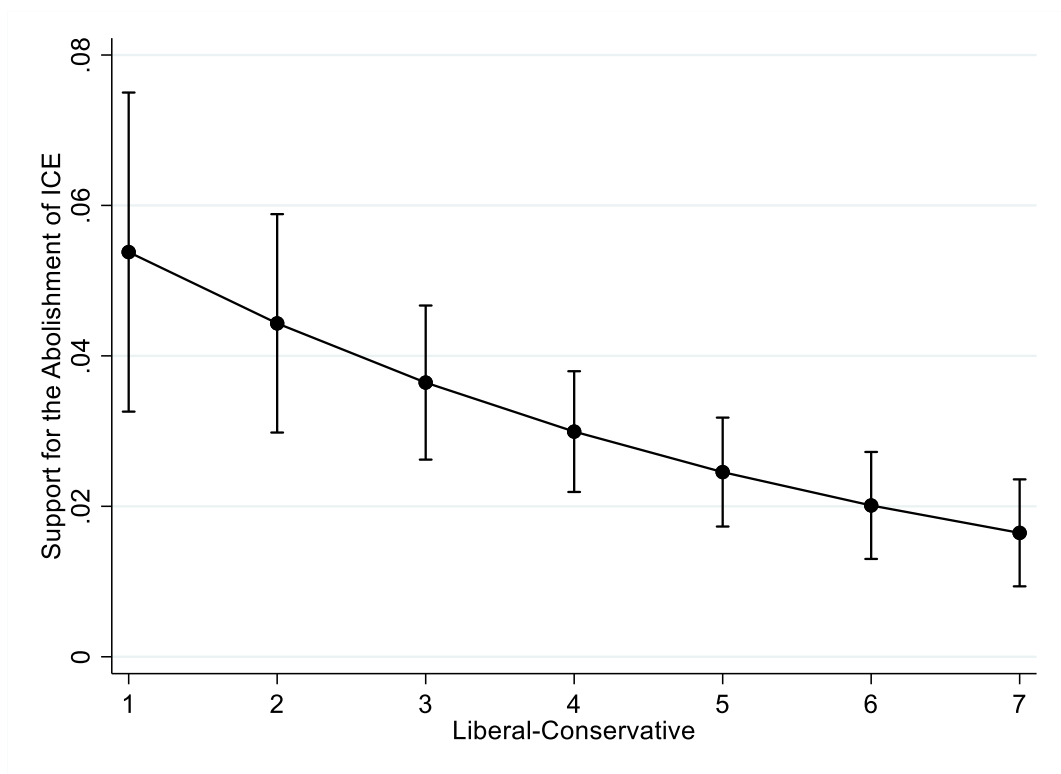
Figure 2.6: Ideology and Predicted Probabilities for Abolish = 5

Figure 2.7 illustrates support for strongly supporting the abolishment of ICE with regard to perceptions of the economy. That is, Figure 2.7 shows the probability of a respondent's strong support for the abolishment of ICE as any particular respondent's perception of the economy becomes better. There is approximately a .06 unit decrease in the probability of supporting the abolishment of ICE if a respondent's perception of the economy goes from the worst possible to the best.
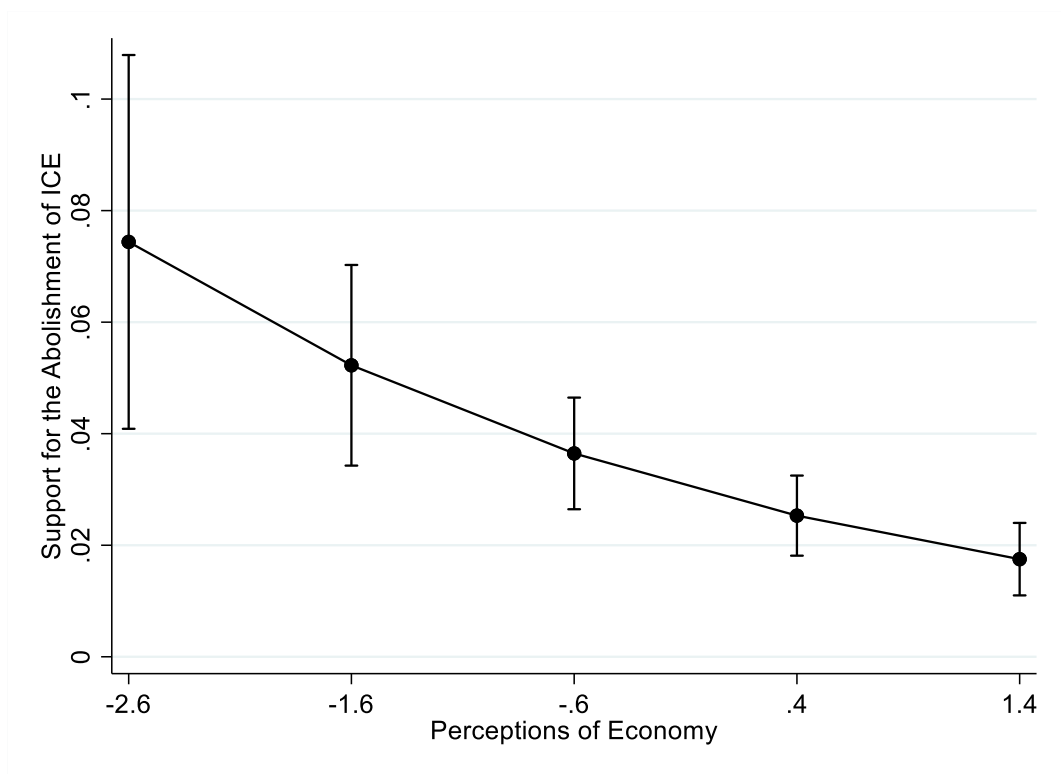
Figure 2.7: Economy and Predicted Probabilities for Abolish ICE = 5

Figure 2.8 illustrates support for the abolishment of ICE with regard to tolerance of other races or ethnicities, or racial attitudes. That is, Figure 2.8 shows the probability of a respondent's strong support for the abolishment of ICE as any particular respondent's perception of other groups of ethnicities becomes more positive. There is approximately a .07 unit increase in the probability of supporting the abolishment of ICE if a respondent's attitudes go from very negative to very positive.
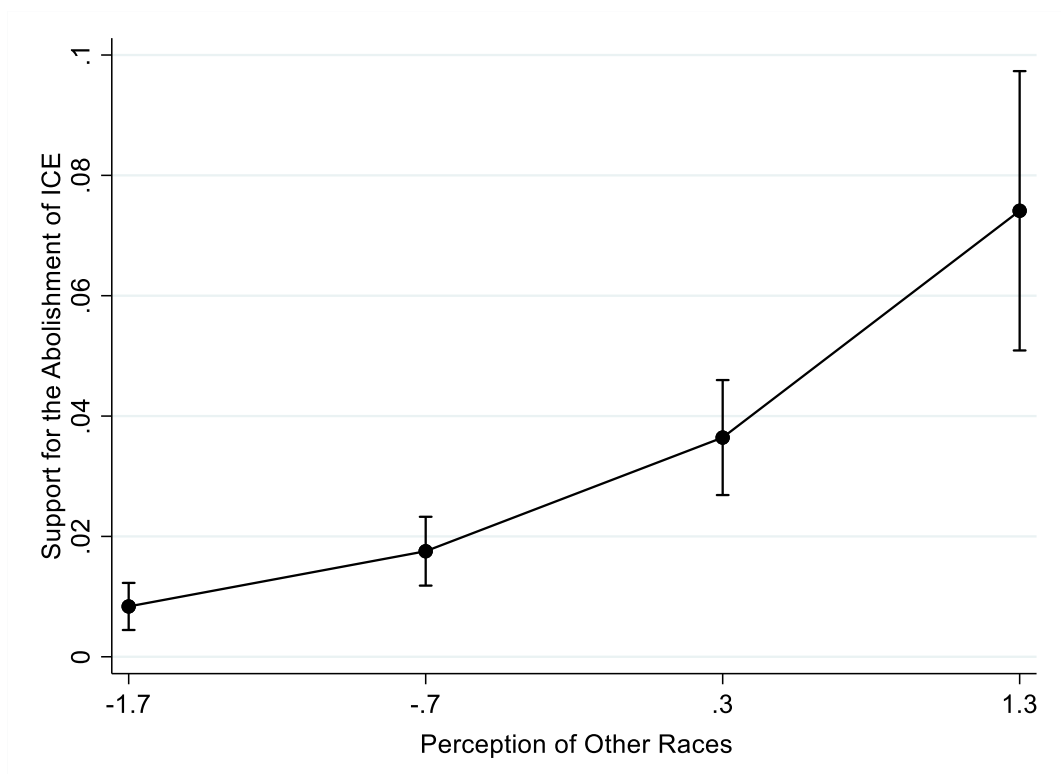
Figure 2.8: Race and Predicted Probabilities for Abolish ICE = 5

Finally, Figure 2.9 illustrates support for the abolishment of ICE with regard to attitudes towards immigrants. That is, Figure 2.9 shows the probability of a respondent's support for the abolishment of ICE as any particular respondent's perception of immigrants becomes increasing negative. There is approximately a .1 increase in the probability of supporting the abolishment of ICE if a respondent's perceptions of immigrants goes from highly negative to highly positive.
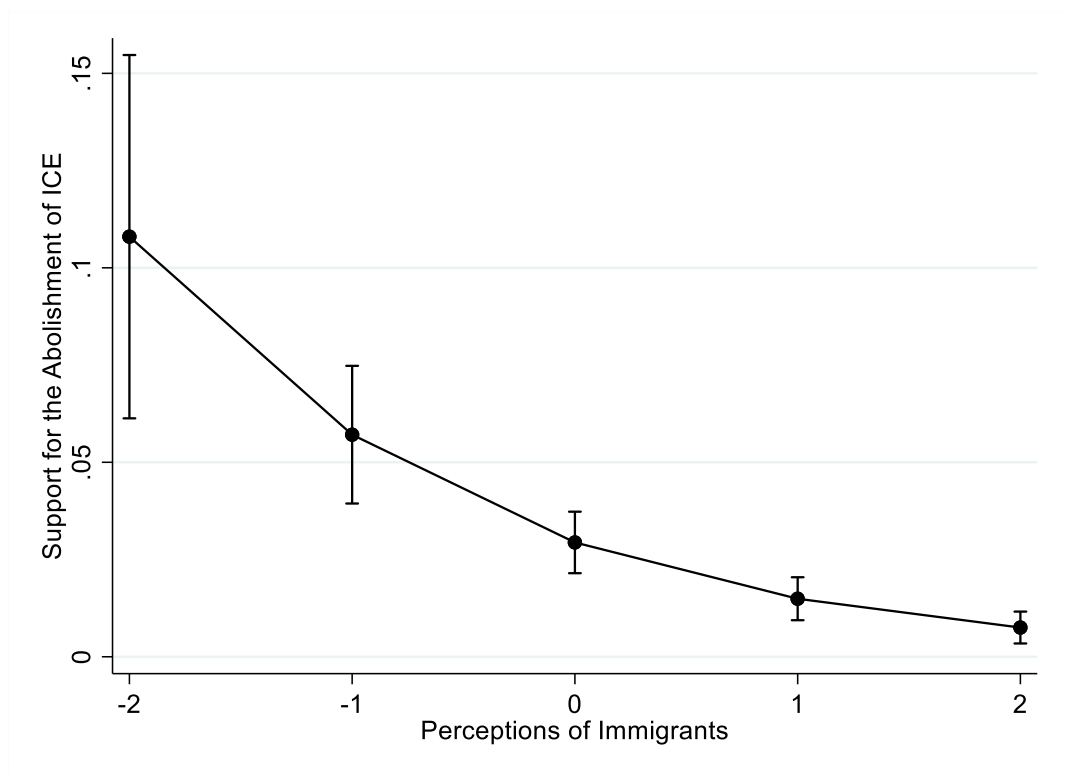
Figure 2.9: Immigrants and Predicted Probabilities for Abolish ICE = 5

Figure 2.10 shows the predicted probabilities associated with all five outcomes of the dependent variable when key independent variables are varied from their lowest value to their highest. Overall, the predicted probabilities for each outcome are on par with what is shown in the figures above. In sum, the economy, ideology, racial attitudes and immigration attitudes share the same patterns as shown above. Importantly, as immigrant attitudes become more positive, support for the abolishment of ICE decreases.

Variable:	Immigration Attitudes	Racial Attitudes	Lib-Cons	Economy
Lowest Value				
Outcome				
1	.11 (.01)	.52 (.04)	.14 (.02)	.10 (.02)
2	.21 (.02)	.28 (.02)	.24 (.02)	.20 (.02)
3	.49 (.02)	.16 (.02)	.46 (.02)	.49 (.02)
4	.11 (.01)	.01 (.003)	.09 (.01)	.11 (.02)
5	.07 (.01)	.008 (.002)	.05 (.01)	.07 (.01)
Highest Value				
1	.50 (.05)	.07 (.01)	.36 (.04)	.41 (.04)
2	.29 (.02)	.16 (.02)	.32 (.02)	.31 (.02)
3	.17 (.02)	.50 (.02)	.26 (.03)	.23 (.03)
4	.01 (.004)	.14 (.02)	.03 (.006)	.02 (.005)
5	.009 (.002)	.10 (.01)	.01 (.003)	.01 (.003)

Mean with standard errors in parentheses.
5 indicates support to abolish ICE while 1 indicates support to not abolish ICE

Figure 2.10: Predicted Probabilities for Each Outcome of Dependent Variable

Conclusion

This paper addresses whether economic, political and social factors affect support to abolish the United States Immigration Customs and Enforcement Agency. What leads an individual to support abolishing ICE? To address strength of support by Americans for a piece of legislation like this, we use an ordered logistic model to capture the indicators that explain variation in the support for the abolishment of ICE. Donald Trump made a campaign promise that he would increase the deportation of undocumented immigrants, and as President, he has kept his promise. In doing so, the salience of immigration policy reform has increased, to where Democrats have begun to support more liberal immigration policy reforms such as completely abolishing ICE. Representative Mark Pocan of Wisconsin introduced legislation for the elimination of this particular agency. The following summarizes arguments made about immigration and immigration policies, and how these arguments could relate to support for the abolition of ICE.

Previous studies on immigration have argued that support for immigration and immigration policies has been driven largely by economic, political and social factors. This study addresses indicators relating to these factors and how they correlate with support to abolish ICE. We have created a theoretical framework that tries to explain support for this phenomenon. In general, the framework is derived from previous studies on immigration and immigration policies. Overall, previous scholarship has provided plausible arguments for why religion, approval of other races and ethnicities, political ideology, and economic perceptions influence attitudes toward immigration-related issues. However, researchers have not yet provided a simple, logical argument for why perceptions toward immigrants would influence support for the abolishment of ICE. Therefore, we suggest that support for the abolishment of ICE is a function of perceptions toward immigrants, other races, and the economy, among other factors. The other main factors include political ideology and how religious a particular respondent is.

The basic hypotheses associated with the theoretical framework are that those who are more tolerant of immigrants and other races, and who are more religious, will be more likely to support the abolishment of ICE. Moreover, respondents who have negative evaluations of the economy will be more likely to support abolishing ICE. Next, liberals are more likely to support eliminating ICE. Finally, there are two hypotheses that feature variables that interact with each other to have a potential additional effect than just the single factors alone. First, more conservative Republicans will be less likely to support the abolishment of ICE. Second, more religious conservatives will be less likely to support getting rid of ICE.

With regard to the results, Americans who are more tolerant of immigrants and other races tend to support the abolishment of ICE. The hypotheses with regard to the economy

behaved as expected, that is, those with negative economic perceptions will be more likely to support abolishing ICE. Liberals are also more likely to support getting rid of the agency. With regard to the interaction effects hypotheses, there is some support that more conservative-Republicans do not support the abolishment of ICE, and opposite expectations with regard to the more religious-conservative respondents. That is, more religious-conservative respondents support the abolishment of ICE. This finding builds on the notion that "Christian-Nationalist" are less likely to be approving of immigrants by taking a more abstract approach rather than specifically analyzing Christian-Nationalist. Except, again, the empirical evidence behaves opposite than what was expected and somewhat contradicts the Christian-Nationalist hypothesis. The implications with regard to religion and support for immigration enforcement policies may be only associated with Christian-nationalist, as evidence from this analysis shows that more religious-conservatives support the abolishment of ICE.

The findings offer insight into which Americans tend to support abolishing ICE, however, more research on this topic can be done. For now, there are some basic implications with regard to which Americans support the abolishment of ICE. Sentiment for eliminating ICE may occur at a time when the economy is not going well, when more liberal oriented congressmen and women are in congress, and when Americans' perceptions of immigrants and other races are positive. The results illustrate how the economy, along with perceptions toward immigrants affect support for abolishing ICE. Economic sociotropic indicators influence particular immigration policy outputs, a finding that coincides with empirical evidence for the effect of economic indicators on immigration support. However, prejudice attitudes toward other races and immigrants may be the most powerful predictor of support for the institution of ICE,

more generally. Overall, the economic, political, and social theoretical framework presented in this research may be applicable to other policy outputs associated with immigration. That is, political ideology, evaluations of the economy and attitudes towards immigrants and other races, may influence other immigration enforcement policies.

Further research is needed to address the implications of these results. Scholars could analyze which particular religions are associated with support for liberal immigration policy reforms such as support for the abolishment of ICE. Are Christian-conservatives or "Christian-nationalist" more or less likely to support the abolishment of ICE? As Leon McDaniel (2011) point out, conservative Christian religion believers in America believe that God has made a unique covenant with America which must be protected from outsiders (Pg. 212). As such, conservative individuals of particular religions may be less likely to support the abolishment of ICE, or support ICE. Fruitful avenues of future research may entail analyzing how specific religions tend to support the abolishment of ICE, while others do not. More specifically, are support for immigration enforcement policies worldwide a function of a state's dominant religion? Moreover, it seems as though more polarized respondents regarding ideology and partisan alignment has a small effect on support for the abolishment of ICE. With this being said, there may be subsets of Democrats or Republicans who feel more strongly about these policies that researchers can identify. Going forward, scholars should try to delineate which groups of Republicans and Democrats will explain more variation in support for abolishing ICE.

CHAPTER 3

SUPPORT FOR PRESIDENT TRUMP

A treasure trove of research on voting behavior has addressed the appeal of political candidates to potential voters. Scholars have addressed what or which characteristics of respondents have led to support for, or opposition to, political figures and candidates throughout time. In this paper, we will determine which factors influence support for President Trump. Building on earlier studies that suggest that demographic characteristics, political ideology, spatial-position issues, and valence issues can explain in part why voters behave at the polls in certain ways, we argue that spatial-position issues will explain the most variation in the approval of President Trump in 2018. This paper analyzes how various factors influence approval for President Trump using Cooperative Congressional Election Study (CCES) survey data that allow us to address which rival vote choice model is potentially the best at explaining support for Trump.

The following sections will discuss earlier studies on attitudes toward Trump, and vote choice behavior more generally, to provide of different perspectives and theoretical arguments. After reviewing earlier literature, we will form our own arguments regarding factors that explain variation in support for Trump. We will describe relationships between Trump's support and explanatory variables that have been suggested to have an influence for his approval. Then, we specify and estimate a multivariate model of support for President Trump that allows us to analyze which factors are most likely to lead to his support in the electorate. Next, we will explain the results of the statistical models and offer substantive explanations for the effects of different variables on Trump's approval. Finally, we offer a conclusion that summarizes the

findings and discusses the potential implications for the result of the 2020 presidential election and going forward.

Previous Literature

Literature on 2016 Presidential Election

Researchers have analyzed support for Donald Trump as a candidate in the 2016 presidential election. The research done on the 2016 presidential election suggests that the economy, immigration, and racial attitudes played important roles in the electoral outcome in which President Trump won. Regarding immigration attitudes, in an experiment performed by Major et al. (2018), the authors show that population and racial population shifts in the United States were associated with support for Trump. Specifically, white Americans were more likely to support Trump if they were presented with information on racial population shifts in the future. In other words, race, and its association to group status threat among white Americans played a role in predicting support for Trump. Sides et al. (2016) also point out that many white Americans who supported Obama and held negative attitudes toward immigrants voted for Donald Trump in 2016. In general, there is evidence to suggest that voters supported Trump based on his immigration policy preferences. Finally, Rothwell and Diego-Rosell (2016) find that as individuals become more exposed to immigrants, their support for Trump decreases. Conversely, racial isolation and lack of exposure Hispanic immigrants raised the likelihood of Trump support.

Economic issues influenced the 2016 presidential election and support for Trump. Specifically, trade was a major part of Trump's campaign, and still is in his on-going presidency. Researchers have suggested that economic growth of the country at the time benefitted Hillary

Clinton more, as was seen by the popular vote.[5] Nevertheless, it would be hard to imagine that the economy or economic issues have not influenced support for Trump throughout his presidency. Trump may have received help from ethnic and racial issues to win the 2016 election. However, his approval since then is being influenced by the economy and economic issues that are occurring during his presidency. The research performed thus far on the 2016 election and support for Trump has suggested that immigration, racial attitudes, and the economy were and remain key factors.

Scholars have been using empirical data for decades to make theoretical arguments for the way voters behave. Overall, there are four main theoretical frameworks that dominate arguments about voting behavior. These main theories are the demographic, socio-psychological theory, the spatial issue position theory, and the valence politics theory. Each one of the theories offers a different perspective and argument for the best explanation for the behavior of voters. The following sections will highlight the arguments associated with each theory to provide a foundation for the model used in this analysis to explain support for, or opposition to, President Trump.

Demographic Literature

The sociology of parties supplies one of the earliest explanations for voting behavior. Specifically, going back to Marxist assumptions, individual votes were determined by their social class location. Within this line of argument, political parties represent class cleavages in society based on resources, income, and social standing. Lipset, in *Political Man,* argues that political parties are divided based on class differences, with lower-income individuals voting for

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[5] See Sides et al. (2016).

leftist policies and higher-income individuals voting for right-leaning policies (1959). In other words, voting behavior is simply a function of the societal class with which an individual identifies.

Sartori (1969) suggests that political sociologists think that socio-economic indicators provide the best explanation for voting behavior Moreover, he argues, "I would thus rejoin my general point that the widely spread belief that socio-economic indicators have a higher predictive potentiality than any other indicator actually represents another instance of the 'objectivist superstition'" (Pg. 213). In short, scholars have argued that political behavior is simply controlled by social factors surrounding citizens and the groups with which they are associated. Other scholars such as Blank (1974) suggest that socio-economic factors were the focus for at least two decades by political scientists studying voting behavior. Socio-economic factors have become engrained in the study of political behavior overtime.

Demographic characteristics of voters are accounted for in almost all, if not all, modern empirical vote choice studies. These models may be the best predictors of vote choice only in certain contexts. For example, Teney et al. (2010) suggest that ethnic voting in Belgium was important in local elections in 2006. Specifically, the authors examine whether ethnic minorities vote for politicians of a certain origin, comparable to basic demographic characteristics. Other scholars such as Knoke and Hout (1974) analyze how socio-demographic characteristics are associated with party affiliations in the United States from 1952 to 1972. The authors demonstrate that age cohorts are correlated with party affiliation, furthering the notion that demographic characteristics of voters have strong predictive power in explaining voting behavior. Clarke et al. (2016) point out that socio-demographic characteristics did not have much

influence in explaining the 2016 Brexit vote. Nonetheless, scholars continue to control for socio-demographic variables such as education, income, and age.

Socio-Psychological "Michigan" Literature

One of the main assumptions put forth by Campbell et al. (1960) that sets the socio-psychological "Michigan" model apart from other theories is the notion that voters' partisanship has long-term stability. Other studies have analyzed how partisan attachments influence political behavior (e.g., Butler and Stokes, 1969; Clarke, Kornberg and Scotto, 2009; Clarke and McCutcheon, 2009). The *American Voter* suggests that an individual's party identification does not change over time. Also, the scholarly work specifies that individuals form partisan attachments through socialization processes that occur during childhood and adolescence. Specifically, partisan attachments of an individual are developed through interactions with their parents, family members, friends, teachers, and other individuals in which they are exposed to and interact with over time. With this being assumed, voters behave the way their political party behaves. Party identification is one of main factors that explain electoral outcome in the United States. The authors argue that there are potentially a few factors that may be more important than one's tie to a political party for voting in certain contexts. Nonetheless, party identification alone can provide a lot of information regarding voting behavior and attitudes of individuals, if not the most. For example, if you identified as a Republican in and around the 1956 presidential election, you were likely going to vote for Eisenhower because he was the Republican presidential candidate and would be sympathetic toward Republican ideals.

The Michigan model assumes that voters have long-standing party loyalties based on psychological attachments formed earlier on in their lives. Through this political ideological

prism, individuals can make decisions about which candidates to choose, and which sides of issues to endorse. Namely, the long-term stability of party identification influences thoughts about short-term forces such as candidate orientation and issue orientation. Through the long-term prism of identifying with a certain political party, voters make decisions about more immediate issues. Nevertheless, several scholars have suggested that voters do not strongly identify with either of two major parties and that many citizens have been increasingly identifying as independents (Bartels, 2000). If increasing numbers of individuals are identifying as independents then the main assumption in the Michigan model of electoral choice becomes weaker. Partisanship also has weakened such that, for example, identifying as a Republican does not necessarily mean a voter will always cast a ballot for a Republican candidate. Nonetheless, Bartels (2000) demonstrates that the estimated effect of party identification on presidential and congressional vote propensities trended upwards from about 1972 to 1996. Since its release, the socio-psychological model put forth by Campbell et al. (1960) has motivated a huge body of research that has spawned support and opposition for their argument.

Spatial-Choice Literature

The spatial-choice model refers to the theoretical argument Downs' (1957) put forth on what drives voting behavior. In very general terms, voters are provided a set of policy positions that range on a spectrum based on the ideological position of the policy. Then, voters analyze how close or far away these policy positions are in relation to their own ideological beliefs. Finally, individuals will choose the policy position that is closest to them on the policy continuum, or the position they are more likely to prefer. On the other hand, there is an assumption that voters have fixed preferences and that politicians manipulate their own policy

and issue advertisements to maximize number of supporters. In this vein, politicians see voters located on a normal curve in which they compete to capture the support of the median voter, thereby enabling them to gain majority support. Nonetheless, as with the Michigan model, this theoretical framework has some significant assumptions about the way voters behave. More specifically, the argument assumes that voters are rational actors who can receive and process information perfectly and can arrange a set of policy issues for which the individual distinguishes between the least and most best policy outcomes in relation to their own preference. Specifically, individuals have perfect information about the policy context, and can accurately distinguish what policies they prefer based on their own ideological preference. A significant assumption to this model is that voters can accurately observe policy positions, and again, accurately identify those positions in relation to their own policy preferences. For example, a voter who prefers more liberal policy positions on certain issues will likely identify where the closest liberal policy position is, and then choose that position and the party closest to it.

The assumption that voters can receive, and process policy position information accurately has been a point of contention in the electoral choice literature. Bendor et al. (2011) suggests that, while building on earlier literature such as Simon (1956), voters can have cognitive constraints in which they do not reach or process the correct information needed to make a utility-maximizing decision. Bounded rationality refers to the potential cognitive restraints an individual has in relation to deciding pertinent to policy outcomes, or some other type of utility-maximizing context. Bounded rationality theorists argue that voters may not be able to process all the information needed to maximize their utility; rather voters display adaptive behavior over time regarding judgments and choices. Nonetheless, the spatial-choice model still emphasizes

58

that voters place themselves on ideological spectrum along with policy positions and pick the policy position that is the closest to their preferred preference. It is still debated whether voters can process what is best policy position for themselves given their preferences. Still, the spatial-choice model remains as one of the main electoral outcome models that may explain attitudes toward President Trump.

Before delineating the explanatory variables that comprise the spatial-choice model, I will discuss the theoretical backdrop, or earlier models that have been used in previous spatial-choice models. More generally, the Downsian model has been applied in various contexts of voting and electoral outcomes. The following scholarly research pointed out does not necessarily highlight all the contexts to which the spatial-issue has been applied; rather it is meant to provide an example of how the model has been used in various contexts around the world. Poole and Rosenthal (1983) examine how the spatial model fits into legislative studies, rather than just presidential vote choice studies. The authors point out that legislators position themselves based on policy choices sets presented in roll call votes, then vote based on how close or far away the policy output is to their own preferences. Rosenthal and Voeten (2004) examine the spatial model in the French roll call context. And, finally, Green and Hobolt (2008) analyze whether the spatial model is relevant in the British General Election context because of evidence that suggested that British voters choose parties based on competence. Similar to what this paper examines except in the British context, the authors analyze the rival models of the spatial and valence model in the 2005 British General Election context.

The novelty of this study is that it captures the relevant influence of the spatial-position model at the executive-level during midterm elections within the United States, or a time that the

president is not up for election. There are potential implications if the spatial model is relevant at the executive-level during this time for legislative elections. If the spatial model is the most influential on executive vote choice or approval, then potential legislative candidates may position themselves to have similar policies as what the president endorses or opposes.

Valence Politics Literature

Stokes (1963) first introduced the notion of valence issues to provide a critique of the spatial-choice model that Downs put forth in 1957. In general, Stokes (1963 and 1992) argued that valence issues are policy positions with one-sided opinion distributions indicating what virtually all voters would want. For example, all voters would agree on that they would want a healthy, growing economy and widely accessible and affordable health care. The commonality of support for these types of issues prompts citizens to try to decide which political party is most likely to do better at addressing the issue. Regardless of an individual's ideological leanings, if he/she thinks that the Democrats will do a better job at growing the economy, these individuals will vote for Democratic candidates. Other valence issues could be policies involving the environment, education and national security. Although salient valence issues can vary from country to country and over time, these issues are commonly identified by having a one-sided distribution for approval or disapproval and perceived party performance on these issues is what matters.

Furthermore, in valence models, partisanship can be updated over time in reaction to observations of political party and leadership performance (Clarke et. al., 2004; Clarke and McCutcheon, 2009), countering one of the main assumptions of the Michigan model. Regarding the valence politics theoretical framework, voters examine the competence and performance of

political parties, then make their decision at the polls based on which parties have performed the best or will be likely to perform the best on these issues. As Sanders et al. (2011) point out there are three principal heuristics that voters use in the valence politics framework: leader images, most important issue and which party can handle it, and partisan attachments. The ability to govern and deliver on issues that large majorities agree on is the main driver that voters use to determine who to support.

Like spatial-issue model studies, the valence model has been applied in different contexts around the world. As scholars such as Sanders and Brynin (1999) have pointed out, spatial-issue models have become less relevant in certain vote choice contexts, leaving the door open for other explanations. Therefore, researchers such as Clarke et al. (2004) have argued, voters are more concerned about valence issues for which party and leadership competency play major roles. It is not about ideological policy positioning per se; rather, voters are concerned with which party can address policy issues the best. Ho et al. (2013) analyze how valence issues influence electoral choice in the Taiwanese context. The findings show that a valence issue model can be the prime explanatory tool for understanding voting in new democracies. Finally, Clark (2008) examines valence issues in Western European elections. The author creates a valence measure based on competency, integrity, and unity/division. Overall, the valence issues model has been studied in various electoral contexts around the world and has become a strong rival to the traditional spatial-choice model. In this vein, valence issues such as a well-functioning economy are often identified as the most important issues, with voters deciding how and who can take perform the best on these issues. Sometimes, policies and their implications are too difficult for voters to understand, so they turn to partisan and leader image cues (heuristics) to make decisions.

Past studies have conceptualized valence issues in different ways and have emphasized how voters behave. To begin, Fiorina (1981) suggests that voters cast their ballot based on retrospective judgments regarding how candidates have performed on issues. As Kiewiet and Rivers (1984) point out, "…recent trends in family finances have been, the higher the marks individuals give to the president for his handling of the economy (Fiorina, 1981) and for the overall job he is doing as president (Wides, 1976; Kinder, 1981)" (Pg. 13 and 14). In other words, there is evidence that individuals vote based on how politicians have performed on economic issues. Contrary to the notion that party identification is highly stable over time, Green (1994) suggests that party identification changes in direction and partisan intensity, disproving the argument that much of voting behavior can be explained by unchanging partisan attachments. As Green (2007) highlights, scholars have used valence proxies in the form of leadership ratings, candidate trustworthiness and honesty, and economic performance ratings. Clarke et al. (2004) consider the competence of candidates as a significant aspect because of underlying factors such as parties converging on certain issues on the left-right spectrum prompting judgments regarding which party or candidate can perform the best on the issue. More generally, party convergence has been attributed to the development of the valence issue argument.

Again, a novel aspect of the present research is that it analyzes the relevance of valence issues in a mid-term election when the president is not running. Yet, there could be potential implications for legislators trying to get elected based on whether voters view them as competent or belonging to a party which has demonstrated its (in)competence. If the valence model is the most influential regarding the approval of President Trump, this may spillover into how voters make decisions regarding support for "down ballot" candidates.

Theoretical Framework

To better understand approval of President Trump, rival theoretical vote choice models will be examined. Scholars such as Downs (1957), Stokes (1963), Clarke et. al. (2004), and others have provided plenty of scholarship to build on. The studies by Clarke et al. (2004 and 2009) and Clarke, Kornberg, and Scotto (2009), help guide us regarding what could be valence and spatial-position issues in the contemporary United States. Somewhat redundant to the valence issue model, the Michigan model of voting behavior argues that party identification is a principal determinant of electoral choice (Campbell et al., 1960). Also, socio-demographic characteristics of respondents could have an influence on approval for Trump as other researchers have argued (i.e. Cutler, 2002 and Berelson et al., 1954). For example, less educated, white males could be particularly supportive of President Trump, while more educated, Hispanic males could be strongly opposed to President Trump.

The present analysis hypothesizes that the spatial-issue model will be the most influential because of how polarized the American electorate has become. In contrast to what Prados-Prado and Dinas (2010) argue, this analysis argues that polarization leads to more spatial-issue voting because the policy spectrum widening out enough to give voters' the opportunity to place themselves anywhere on a less restrictive ideological spectrum. More generally, there is an extensive amount of scholarship that has been performed on vote choice and political leader support, so theorizing support for President Trump is not necessarily an explorative task. Overall, there are four main models that we examine to help find what affects support for Trump. The valence, spatial-position, demographic, and most important issue models will be examined to see which rival model supplies the best explanation for Trump' support. As discussed earlier, there

have been multiple theoretical models developed by scholars that suggest which factors best explain voters' preferences. Examining support for Trump in 2018 within a polarizing electoral context, when he is not in a horse race with another candidate, can advance scholarship on voting behavior and political leader support. The goal of this analysis to determine which rival model influences approval for President Trump's job performance the most.

Spatial-Choice Argument

Anthony Downs (1957) put forth an argument in relation to vote choice and how voters' make decisions based on where they place themselves on a policy spectrum relative to the potential political candidate available and their policy positions, or a political party's policy position in general. As discussed earlier, Downs argues that voters are provided a set of policy positions that range on a continuum based on the ideological position of the policy. Then, voters analyze how close or far away these policy positions are in relation to their own ideological beliefs. Finally, individuals will choose the policy position that is closest to them on the spectrum, or the position they are more likely to prefer. The argument put forth in the spatial-choice theoretical framework is that voters select candidates based on who is closer to their own policy preferences. Individuals analyze policy positions of candidates in relation to their own, then choose the candidate that is nearest to them. The spatial-choice model assumes that voters are rational, in the sense that they can choose the best outcome in relation to their own preferences. With candidates acknowledging the spatial position of the electorate, they will either offer convergent or divergent policies to attract voters (Merrill and Grofman, 1999). In a more polarized electorate, how do spatial position issues affect support for political candidates such as President Trump? The variables analyzed that are derived from the spatial-choice theoretical

framework are a respondent's spatial position to President Trump, as well as position issues concerning racial attitudes, immigration attitudes, attitudes toward abortion, and health care provision attitudes.

A basic causal mechanism of the spatial-choice model is that voters can process information about candidates' positions and assess that information to make an optimal decision on a policy or candidate. The mechanism that links position issues to vote choice is the informational processing of the voters on which issues are either the closet or farthest away from a candidate compared to the individual. Rational liberals would choose a more liberal-oriented candidate, while rational conservatives would choose a more conservative candidate. Overall, rational voters make decisions on candidates based on their personal policy positions in comparison to policy positions offered by rival candidates.

A respondent's spatial position to President Trump, racial attitude, immigration attitude, attitude toward abortion, and health care attitude are all included in the spatial-position model because they all signify American's positions toward a certain policy outcome or candidate and are not considered valence issues. Specifically, these are issues that not all voters agree upon, such as wanting a healthy economy. Rather, these are policy positions that divide Americans. To begin, some Americans do not support the policies put forth by the Trump Administration, regardless of party identification. Next, racial resentment attitudes of respondents illustrate policy positions about friendly policies toward other races. Some Americans do not agree that all races should have the opportunity to get ahead in America, or more opportunities should be given to certain races. Furthermore, immigration policy positions are strongly divided in the United States with some people wanting less restrictive immigration policies and others wanting

more restrictive immigration policies. Abortion is yet another policy issue that is strongly divisive. Finally, although supplying good health care to Americans is not up for much debate, the means in which health care is provided is. Although most Americans want high quality and affordable health care, there are stark differences in policy positions advanced to reach these goals. The means of supplying health care is a hotly debated topic.

Valence Issues Argument

Scholars such as Stokes (1963) have put forth an argument relating to "valence issues" to provide a rival explanation to that advanced by the spatial-issue model. As discussed above, valence issues are issues or policy positions for which virtually everyone agrees. For example, citizens would agree that they would want a healthy economy with plenty of job opportunities and low rates of inflation. The valence issues in this study are any security-related issue, any economic-related issue, and issues dealing with society such as moral values. Virtually everyone wants a strong economy, wants to feel protected, and wants strong moral values. Since these are one-sided issues, the question then becomes which political party or candidate is most likely to do a better job of addressing the issue, rather than the spatial proximity of voters in relation to policy outputs or candidates.

More recently, authors such as Clarke et al., (2004 and 2009) along with Clarke, Kornberg, and Scotto (2009), have further developed a valence politics model based on Stokes' earlier work. In general terms, Clarke et al. (2010) demonstrate that the economy is a classic valence issue in the British context, but valence issues change over time and by context. Namely, immigration may be a spatial-position issue within the United States, but a valence issue in the United Kingdom. The valence model put forth in this analysis consists of economic evaluations.

Building on Whiteley (1984), the valence model in the present analysis uses economic evaluations as the main valence proxy. As mentioned already, most Americans can agree that a strong economy is important to everyone. Scotto et al. (2010) suggest that Obama was able to capitalize on a worsening economy as it became the dominant campaign issue in the 2008 presidential election. Simply put, the mostly negative reaction by the public to the economic crash occurring in 2007 and 2008 drove the incumbent (Republican) party out of the White House because of a lack of faith that it could address the crisis and restore the economy to good health.

A casual mechanism that links economic evaluations to President Trump's approval is that voters are rational at least in a "rough and ready" way. Although there is an assumption that parties and voters converge on issues, voters calculate which candidate is the most competent for the presidency simply by examining how the economy is performing. If the incumbent party is presiding over an economy in recession, then voters are likely to support candidates from other parties that seem more competent and able to better the economy. So, similar to the spatial-issue model, an element of rationality of voters connects economic evaluations to presidential job approval.

Research Design

Data

To address what influences attitudes towards President Trump, I use survey data from the 2018 Cooperative Congressional Election Study to determine which factors lead to approval of the job performance of Trump. YouGov, a leading public opinion research company administers the CCES surveys to representative national samples of the American electorate every year.

YouGov administers national internet surveys using a sampling frame that consists of actively recruited participants rather than volunteers. The number of total respondents in my CCES module is 1000, with respondents coming every region of the United States. The CCES survey data are appropriate for this study because of their quality and richness as far as supplying a representative national sample of the American electorate in 2018.

Dependent Variable

The dependent variable in the following analysis is approval of President Trump measured by what respondents think of his job performance on a 1 to 5 scale, ranging from strongly approve to strongly disapprove. Respondents in the 2018 CCES were asked whether they approved of the job President Trump is doing. The dependent variable specifically asked, "Do you approve or disapprove of the way each is doing their job…," with President Trump being prompted. The highest rated response, or a 5, indicates strong approval of the job President Trump is doing, while 1 indicates strong disapproval. In addition, there is a middle category that indicates that the respondent is "Not sure." The dependent variable thus is a traditional ordinal variable.

Independent Variables

The main independent variables are meant to capture factors associated with the rival vote choice models - spatial-position, valence, and socio-demographic. Also, there is a most important issue model that captures which issues are the most influential for approval of President Trump. For the spatial-position model, the variables consist of a spatial-position measure of how close respondents approve of Trump, a racial resentment factor analysis and its associated factor scores for how each respondent feels about other races, an immigration factor

analysis and its associated factor scores for how respondents feel about immigrants, an abortion factor and its associated factor scores for perceptions toward abortions, and a health care factor analysis and its associated factors scores for how much each respondent wants to change the American healthcare system. Based on early work by Kinder and Sears (1981), the racial resentment question battery allows scholars to measure feelings toward other races. We also borrow the economic evaluations factor scores measurement idea from Clarke and Stewart (1995) when the authors analyzed prime ministerial approval in the United Kingdom. For the valence model, dummy party identification variables for Republicans, Democrats, and other parties are constructed (Independents are the reference category), along with an economic evaluation factor analysis and its associated factors scores that measure judgments about the economy for each respondent. Finally, for the socio-demographic model, dummy variables identifying respondents racel/ethnicity, along with how educated a respondent is, their gender, age, and region of residence.

Finally, a most important issue model is estimated to illustrate that voters who believe various issues are the most important leads to support or disapproval of the job President Trump is doing. More specifically, respondents are asked what the most important issues are facing the country and then given a list of 15 choices. The choices of issues pertain to moral values of the country, unemployment, international trade, terrorism, racism, the economy, poverty, law and order, inequality, immigration, health care, the nuclear threat of North Korea, government debt, the environment, and student loan debt. Each respondent is given the opportunity to approve or disapprove of the job President Trump is doing on the most important issue to that respondent. For example, if a respondent perceives immigration as the most important issue facing the

nation, then they could have a certain view of how Trump is performing on the issue. Using these data, we will be able to determine which issue has the largest effect on Trump's job approval rating.

Methodology

For the statistical analysis, the data I use is 2018 CCES survey data. I use ordered logit statistical models to investigate which factors influence support for President Trump. There are three rival models which feature different explanatory that capture the socio-demographic, valence, and spatial-position arguments, as well as one model that identifies the most important issues to respondents and support for Trump. Therefore, four statistical models are used to try to discern which factors influence best explain support for President Trump. The ordered logit model is an appropriate statistical estimation technique because of the dependent variable being a 1 to 5 approval measure of President Trump. Higher ratings indicate more approval of the job President Trump is doing, while lower rating signify lower approval of the job Trump is doing.

Descriptive Statistics

This section provides basic descriptive statistics associated with the data and helps give a better idea of the distribution of attitudes regarding President Trump's approval. Showing the distribution of attitudes on specific factors and their relationship with support for Trump will provide an impetus for aspects of the theoretical argument presented in this analysis. The following section will reveal the distribution of respondents and their policy-proximity to Trump, and its relationship to support for Trump. Furthermore, a distribution of feelings toward Trump will be illustrated based on gender. Finally, a series of the most important issues facing the country since 2008 will be presented, as well some other figures related to most important issues

perceived by respondents. All the following figures use pre-election survey data from the CCES in certain years.

To begin, Figure 3.1 presents Trump's approval based on gender using 2018 CCES pre-election survey data. In general terms, men are more supportive of Trump than women. Around 50 percent of women strongly disapprove while only 38 percent of men strongly disapprove of the job President Trump is doing. There are few individuals who are neutral about the President. This is a sign of how polarizing Trump is as a political figure with 4 percent of women and 5 percent of men being neutral on his approval. Finally, 31 percent of men strongly support Trump, while 22 percent of women strongly approve of him.
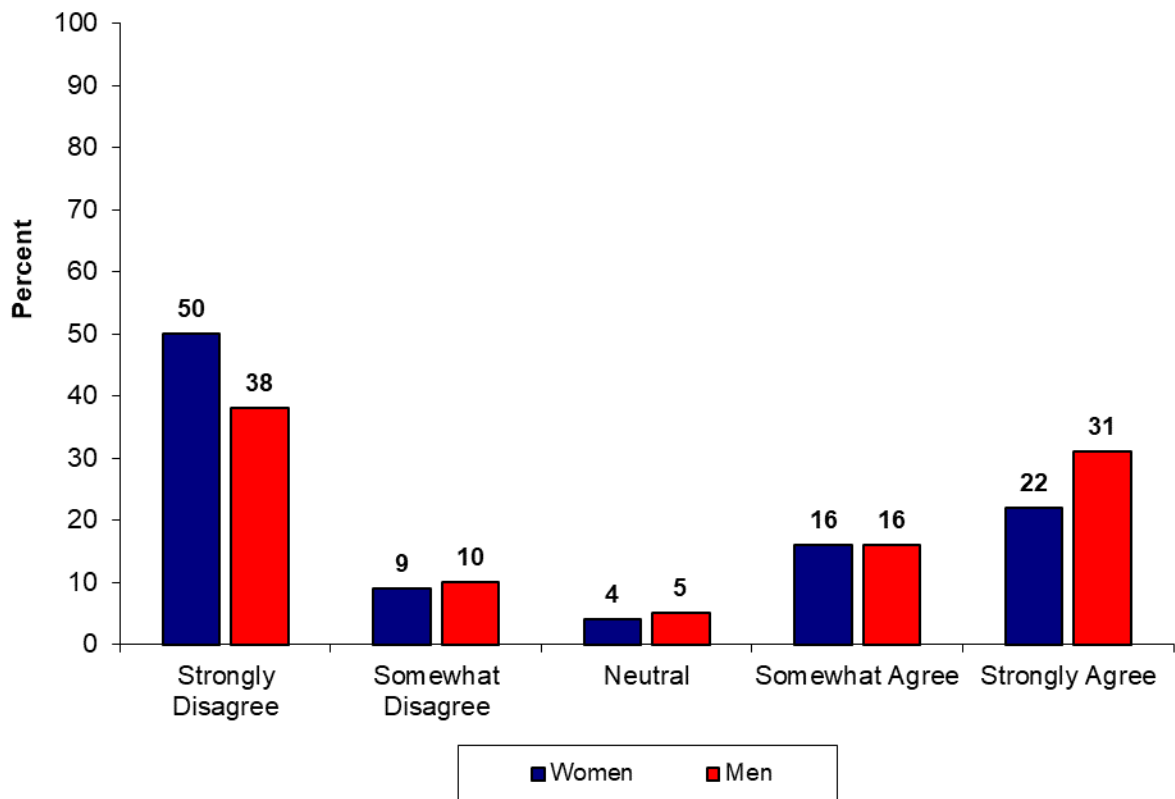
Figure 3.1: Trump Approval and Gender

Next, Figure 3.2 reveals the bivariate distribution of policy-proximity to Trump and support for him using 2018 CCES pre-election survey data. In general terms, the farther one is away from Trump on a policy-proximity scale, the more people disapprove of him, and the closer they are to Trump, the more they support him. Specifically, 98 percent of respondents who identify as being the farthest away from Trump on the policy position spectrum strongly disapprove of the job he is doing. In contrast, 48 percent of those who are close and 42 percent of those who are the closest to President Trump on the policy position spectrum, strongly approve. Figure 3.2 illustrates the intensity of approval/disapproval of Trump as policy positions change.

Figure 3.2: Approval of President Trump by Policy Proximity to Trump

The most important issues over the past decade can be categorized in four main areas: immigration, the economy, health care, and the environment. Using 2008, 2010, 2012, 2014, 2016, 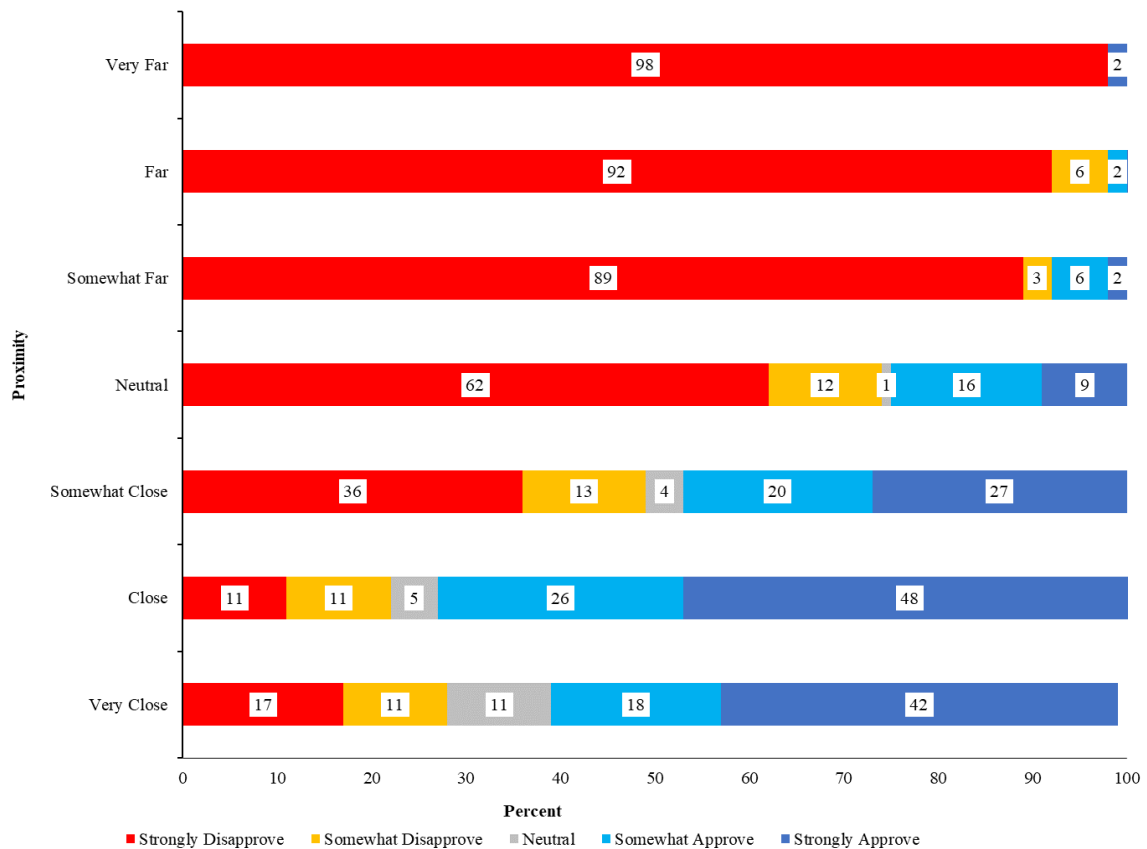2018, and 2019 CCES pre-election survey data, Figure 3.3, Figure 3.4, and Figure 3.5 illustrate change in the most important issues over time. Figure 3.3 demonstrates that the economy was a topic of prime concern to respondents in 2008, 2010, 2012, with over 50 percent of individuals identifying this as the most important issue facing the nation. Although the economy was still the dominant issue in 2014, 2016, and 2019, in 2018 and 2019, immigration, health care, and the environment have increased in importance to respondents. In 2018, about 12 percent of respondents thought immigration was the most important issue, while 19 percent perceived health care to be the most important issue. In 2019, again, about 12 percent of respondents thought immigration was the most important issues, 13 percent thought it was health care, and 14 percent mentioned the environment. Figure 3.3 shows the importance of the economy and various issues between 2008 and 2019.
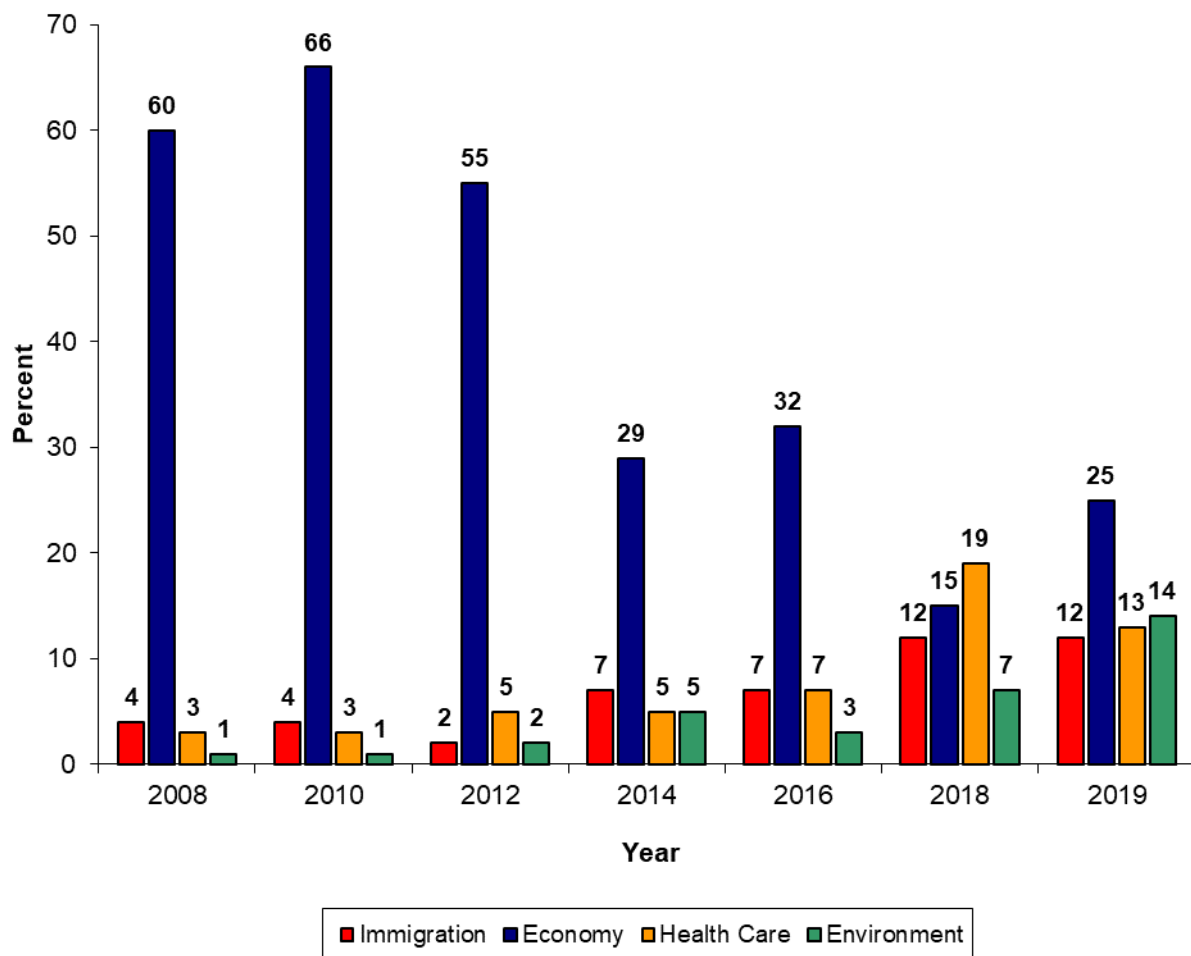
Figure 3.3: 2008 to 2019 Most Important Issues

The top three most important issues for 2018 and 2019 are shown in Figure 3.4 using

CCES survey data. Again, the issues pertain to immigration, the economy, health care, and the

environment. The economy has been among the top three important issues, with about 57 and 46

percent of respondents in 2018 and 2019 identifying this in their top three. In 2018 and 2019, 45

and 42 percent of respondents, respectfully, identified health care as a top three issue.

Immigration has been steady issue with 33 percent of respondents placing this issue in their top

three in both years. Finally, the environment has become more important, going from 18 percent

in 2018 to 25 percent in 2019. Figure 3.4 generally shows the pattern of the top three issues in 2018 and 2019, and one can see the inverse relationship between the economy and the environment as important issues - as the economy becomes less important, the environment becomes more important.
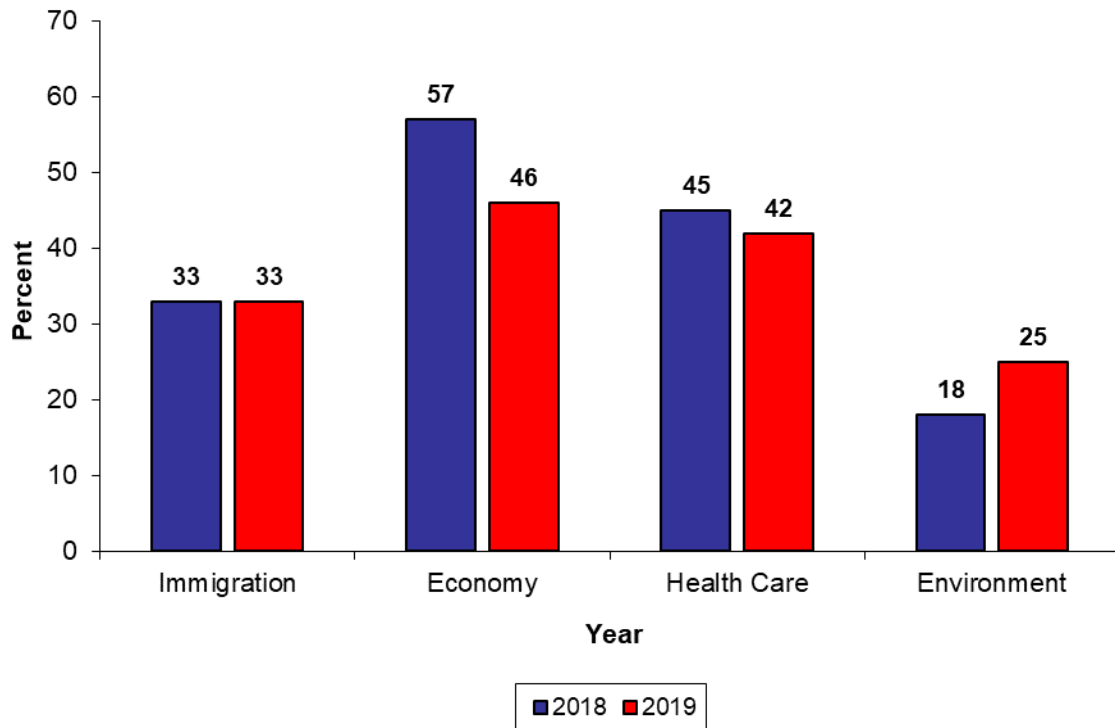
Figure 3.4: 2018 and 2019 Top 3 Most Important Issues

A visual representation of the most important issues to respondents and how they related to Trump's approval rating is shown in Figure 3.5 using 2018 CCES data. For those who think the economy is the most important issue, about 56 percent approve of President Trump. The two other issues that lead to majority approval of the President are law and order and terrorism. Of those who believe law and order is the most important issue facing the nation, about 82 percent approve of Trump's performance. For terrorism, of those who perceive terrorism as being the

most important issue, about 81 percent approve of Trump. Regarding all other issues, the majority of respondents disapprove of his job performance. Most respondents who think that either moral values, unemployment, trade, racism, poverty, inequality, health care, conflict with North Korea, government debt, the environment, and student loan debt, all disapprove of the job performance of President Trump. The strongest levels of disapproval are on issues such as trade, racism, inequality, health care, and the environment for which 83 percent, 90 percent, 89 percent, 69 percent, and 94 percent, respectfully, disapproving of the President's performance.

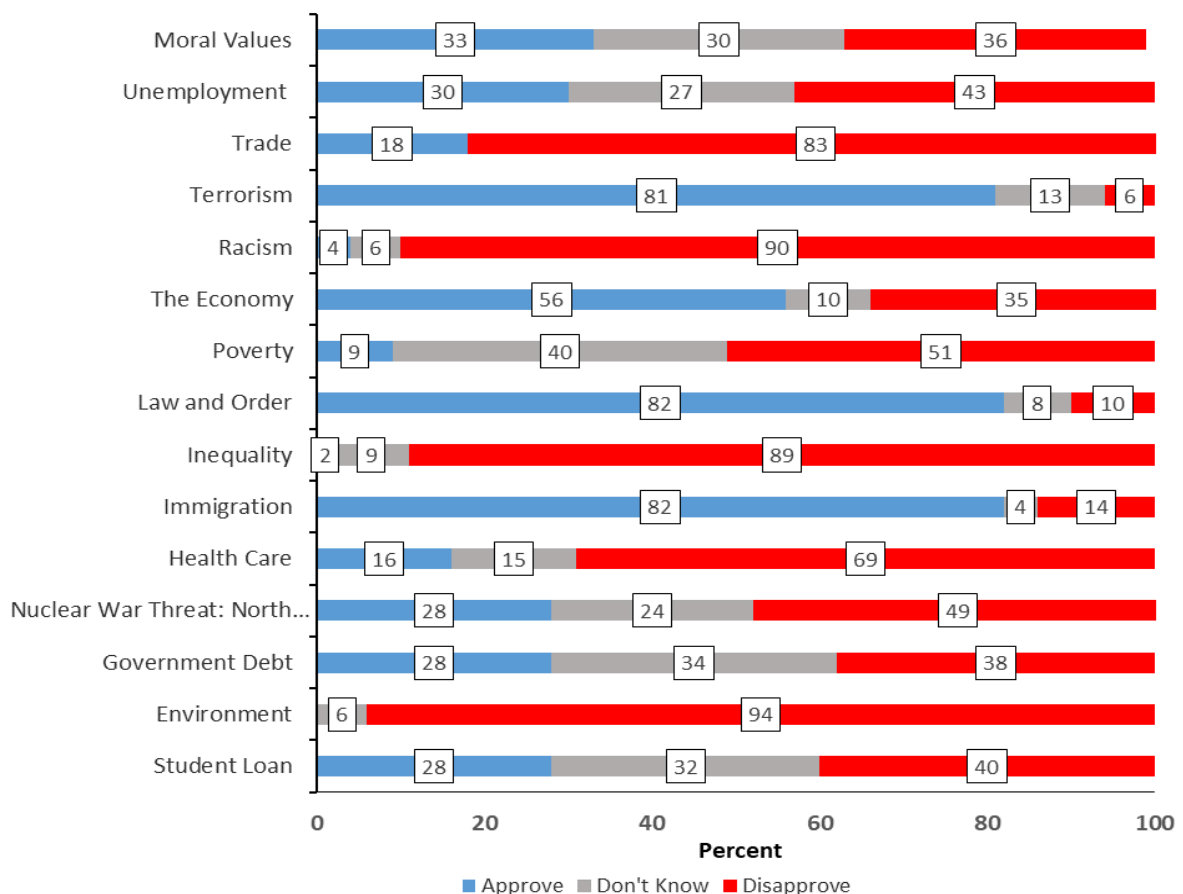Figure 3.5: Approval of Trump's Performance on Most Important Issues

Statistical Model Results

The results of the statistical models generally provide support for all the spatial-issue, valence, and demographic arguments made above. Nonetheless, the best fitting model based on explaining the most variation in the dependent variable and having the lowest Akaike Information Criterion (AIC) and lowest Bayesian Information Criterion (BIC) is the spatial-issue model. The valence model offers the most competition for the spatial-issue model, while the demographic model poorly fits the data. In this section, the results of each model will be discussed, along with the substantive effects of main variables in each model. Table 3.1 reveals the results of the spatial-issue, valence, and demographic models, while Table 3.2 shows the results of the most important issues model.

For the spatial-position issue model, all variables are statistically significant, indicating that these factors are correlated with President Trump's job approval. The spatial model explains about 40 percent of the variation in the dependent variable. More specifically, starting with racial attitudes, if a respondent has positive feelings, they are likely to disapprove of President Trump's job performance. With importance of health care to a respondent, this has a negative effect on President Trump's approval. In other words, if a respondent thinks health care is more important, then they are less likely to approve of Trump job performance. For immigrant perceptions, those who support more restrictive immigration policies are more likely to support President Trump. Specifically, those individuals who have negative attitudes toward immigrants, are more likely to approve of the job President Trump is doing. Finally, those who are farther away from Trump on the left-right policy spectrum are less likely to approve of the performance of President Trump.

The valence issue model explains about 35 percent of the variation in the dependent variable, and almost all independent variables are statistically significant. To begin, Democrats are less likely to support the job President Trump is doing. If a respondent identifies as a Republican, then they are likely to approve of the job President Trump is doing. A dummy variable for other political party identifiers is not statistically significant. Finally, economic evaluations have positive influences on President Trump's approval - if respondents have positive evaluations of the economy, then they will be more likely to support Trump.

In the demographic model, there are many variables that are statistically significant. The variables that are not statistically significant are family income, "other" race/ethnicity and residence in the Eastern or Western regions. The variables that are significant are whether a respondent is Black, Hispanic, Asian, the respondents' education, gender, age, and whether they live in the South. Hispanics, Blacks, and Asians are all less likely to approve of President Trump and residents of the South are more likely to do so. If respondents are more highly educated, they are less likely to support President Trump. Men are more likely to support President Trump, whereas women are less likely to do so. Older respondents are more likely to support President Trump as well. Overall, the demographic model explains just 6 percent of the variation within the dependent variable.

Table 3.1: Spatial-Issue, Valence, and Demographic Models

Variable	Spatial-Issue	Valence	Demographic
Position Trump	-.412***		
Racial Attitudes	-.290***		
Immigration Attitudes	1.606***		
Abortion	-0.504***		

Table 3.1 continued

Health Care Attitudes	-.730***		
Democrat		-1.79***	
Republican		1.75***	
Other		.233	
Economic Evaluations		1.87***	
Family Income			-.001
Black			-1.667***
Hispanic			-.987***
Asian			-.868**
Other Race			-.470
Education			-.242***
Gender			.514***
Age			.018***
East			-.045
South			.746***
West			.363*
N	1000	1000	1000
R^2	0.405	0.350	0.065
AIC	1642.653	1791.071	2583.805
BIC	1686.822	1830.333	2657.422

All the issues in the most important issues model explain 23 percent of the variation in presidential approval. The issues that influence President Trump's approval are student loan debt, the environment, health care, immigration, inequality, law and order, racism, terrorism, and moral values. The issues that were not significant were government debt, conflict with North Korea, poverty, the economy, tariffs/trade and unemployment. Student loan debt, the environment, health care, inequality, and racism, all have a positive and statistically significant influences on Trump's approval. Those who perceive these as the most important issues are more likely to approve of Trump's job performance. Immigration, law and order, terrorism, and moral

79

values, all have a negative and statistically significant influence on Trump's approval. Those who view these as the most important issues are less likely to approve of Trump.

Table 3.2: Most Important Issues

Variable	Issues
Student Loan Debt	0.328**
The Environment	0.687***
Government Debt	-.036
Nuclear North Korea	-0.216
Health Care	0.348***
Immigration	-0.682***
Inequality	.649***
Law and Order	-.332***
Poverty	.045
The Economy	-.072
Racism	.802***
Terrorism	-.319***
Tariffs/Trade	.152
Unemployment	-.109
Moral Values	-.327***
N	1000
R^2	0.231
AIC	2139.471
BIC	2232.718

Note on P-value: *.05, **.01, *.001**

Along with the spatial-position model performing the best, several spatial issues tend to be correlated with Trump's approval. Those issues are health care and immigration. Looking at the results, one also sees that several valence issues are correlated with Trump's approval. These issues are law and order, terrorism and inequality. The economy, a traditional valence issue, is not correlated with President Trump's approval in the most important issues model. Nonetheless, there is some evidence to suggest that both issues influence feelings about him.

Substantive Effects

The following figures show the predicted probabilities in relation to economic evaluations and immigration attitudes. Specifically, the figures show the probability of supporting President Trump when the variable of interest is shifted from its lowest value to its highest, while holding all other variables at their means. Table 3.3 demonstrates the predicted probabilities for economic evaluations and Table 3.4 shows the predicted probabilities for immigration attitudes. Table 3.3 shows that going from strongly negative attitudes to strongly positive attitudes about the economy prompts about a 99 percent change in supporting Trump. Namely, if an individual perceives that the economy is doing well, then he/she is much more likely to support the job President Trump is doing. For Table 3.4, shifting from strongly positive attitudes to strongly negative attitudes about immigrants invokes a 90 percent change in Trump approval. If someone perceives immigrants in a negative light, then they are much more likely to support the job President Trump is doing.

Table 3.3: Predicted Probabilities of Economic Evaluations
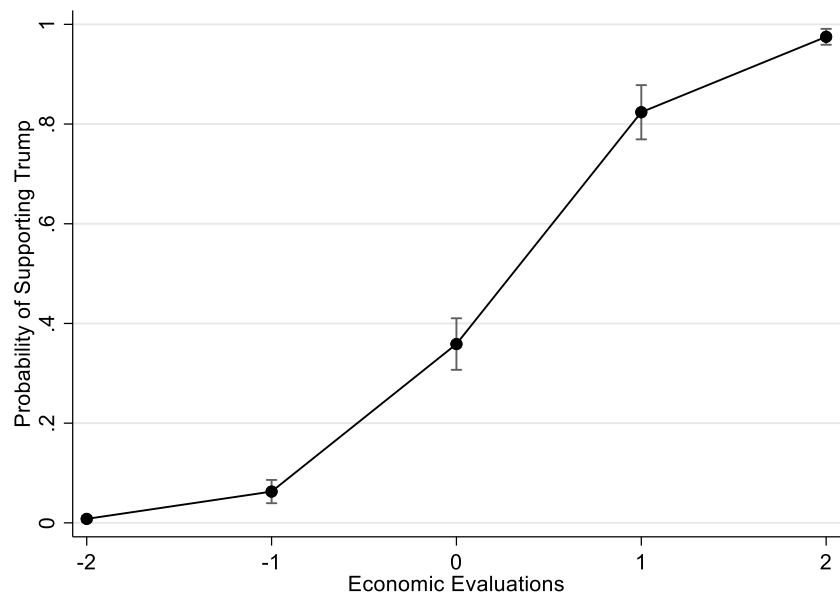
Table 3.4: Predicted Probabilities of Immigrations Attitudes
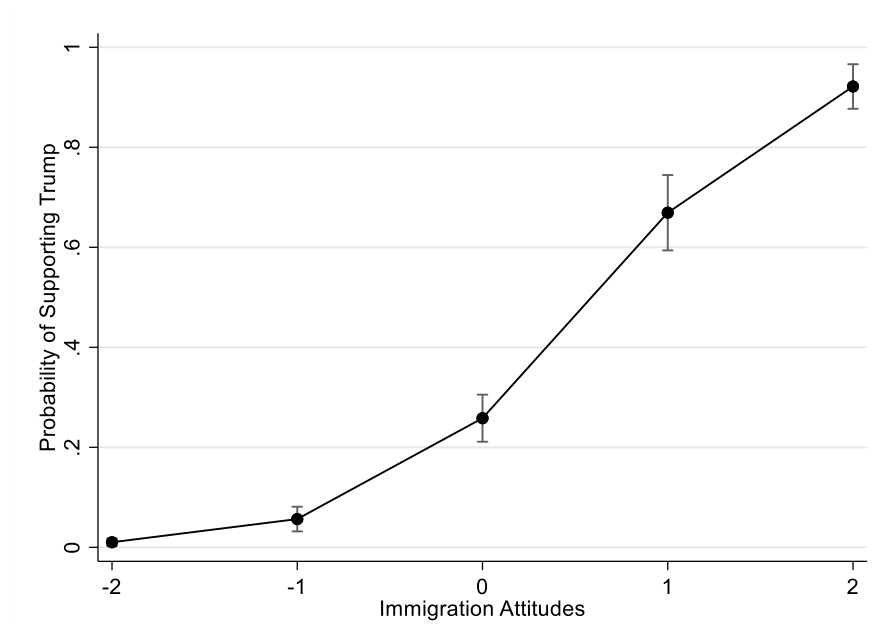
Summary and Conclusion

There are several implications for the results of the statistical models presented above. These analyses address rival vote choice models for explaining support for Trump at the time of the 2018 midterm elections. Do valence, spatial-position or demographic models best explain the variation in support for the job approval of President Trump? Which of the most important issues facing the country correlates with support for Trump? To explain variation in President Trump's approval, an ordered logistic statistical estimation technique is used to capture which indicators and model performs the best. The importance in understanding which indicators are correlated with Trump's approval has implications for the "Red Wave" that the President predicted would take place during the 2018 midterm elections. As Trump said in an interview around the 2018

midterms, "The Blue Wave is dead."[6] If the valence model best explains variation in Trump's approval rating, this may have had a ripple effect for the entire Republican Party regarding its ability to win seats in Congress. Nevertheless, in the models presented above, the spatial-position issue model provided the best explanation of support for the president, leaving the door open for more Democrats to position themselves closer to voters and potentially gain seats in Congress. Although using these models are not applied to approval of legislative candidates, there could be a trickle-down effect if Trump's own approval rating was heavily influenced by one of these models. The results may have implications for the 2020 presidential election as well. Spatial-position issues may be best at explaining variation in the president's job approval going into the 2020 election.

Earlier studies of presidential approval have focused on socio-demographic characteristics, party identification, spatial-position or valence issues. Based on theoretical arguments regarding explaining presidential approval, this study illustrates that spatial-position issues accounts for the most variation in support for Trump. In line with earlier scholarship, policy proximity to candidates, racial attitudes, immigration attitudes, abortion, and health care policy issues are considered to be spatial-position issues in the U.S context. All of these factors are correlated with Trump's approval. Reactions to the economy - a canonical valence issue - also are correlated with Trump's approval. Several demographic characteristics such as race/ethnicity, gender, region of residence, age, and education are also have significant effects. Finally, there are policy issues that respondents care about that correlate with Trump's approval.

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[6] https://www.politico.com/story/2018/11/01/trump-2018-midterm-blue-wave-dead-953092

Student loan debt, the environment, health care, immigration, inequality, law and order, racism, terrorism, and moral values are all are related to support for the president.

Future research could try to examine how these rival voting models apply to voting for legislative candidates in the 2018 or 2022 midterm elections. Scholars could analyze if there is a trickle-down effect regarding support for the president and lower-office political candidates. Can executive approval have an influence on a "Red Wave" or "Blue Wave," or are these mutually exclusive phenomena? Addressing this question could unpack what happens between presidential elections and why. Moreover, do those who perceive some issue as being the most important vote in the same manner for candidates at different levels of government. In other words, if voters think that the economy is the most important issue, will they vote for candidates at each level that they perceive will get the economy in better shape, regardless of political affiliation? Addressing these questions in future research will bolster our understanding of the behavior of American voters.

CHAPTER 4

ICE SURVEY EXPERIMENT

President Trump has made several statements regarding immigration and immigration enforcement in order to pitch to American voters the idea that immigrants could be potential threats to the nation. Research has been performed in a variety of contexts about how leader image influences vote choice (Clarke and Whitten, 2013; Stewart and Clarke, 1992; Kaase, 1994). For this analysis, we will analyze whether statements by President Trump on specific perceived threats from immigrants to the United States economy, citizens' physical security, and the country's culture influence support for immigration enforcement. Keeping in mind these distinctions, analyzing support for immigration enforcement agencies such as the United States Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) agency is useful if one can identify motivational factors associated with supporting enforcement. Here, we analyze whether statements made by President Trump on issues such as immigration make a difference to the manner in which Americans perceive the issue. By using a survey experiment research design administered by YouGov in the 2019 Cooperative Congressional Election Study, we analyze which statements on the type of threats from immigration influence how Americans assess the issue. In other words, can political leaders such as President Trump make statements that influence public opinion on certain issues? Ultimately, this research aims to undercover the interplay between leader image and multifaceted issues such as immigration. How individuals perceive salient issues may depend on how policymakers prime and frame the issues.

In the following sections, I discuss research on immigration threats, previous experimental survey designs and how they have grown in social science studies over time, and political leader images and their effect on voting behavior. The research design for this study is derived from a combination of these three types because it uses a survey experiment to address the influence of leader images on immigration. Therefore, a review of how the theoretical arguments are formed is useful. Next, a discussion of the actual research design and results will be presented. Finally, an explanation of the results, their implications, and concluding remarks about the study will be put forth. The results of the analysis will help guide future research in which the electoral landscape of a country is deeply polarized. There has been many studies that have analyzed the causes and consequences of immigration, but there has not been much work performed on feelings toward immigration enforcement policies. The research presented in this analysis fills a gap in the literature that scholars studying immigration-related issues could explore in greater detail in the future.

Previous Literature

In the social sciences, scholars have increasingly used experimental designs to address research questions in their respective fields. As Mullinix et al. (2015) point out, survey experiments have appealed to many social scientists because this type of research design provides a credible means of causal inference that is generalizable to a target population. Experiments allow researchers to study causal relationships between variables of interest with greater confidence than is possible with other research designs (Clarke et al., 1999; Ansolabehere et al., 1994; Inglehart, 1990). As such, survey experiments have been increasingly used throughout the social sciences over the past two decades. Institutional innovation, simulations,

and randomized trial experiments have been identified as experimental research designs that have proliferated in recent years (Druckman et al., 2006). In particular, randomized trial experiments in a survey context have allowed researchers to understand the cause and effect relationship between sets of variables using data gathered from a target population. Within the survey scenario, experiments have been increasingly put forth in every type of survey mode. Not only have been different types of survey models been increasingly used, but various types of survey generating processes have been used. The National Science Foundation's funded Time-sharing Experiments for the Social Sciences (TESS), Amazon's Mechanical Turk (MTurk), common work place experiments among staff, and the traditional sample using college students, are all currently being used in the social sciences to understand cause and effect processes (Mullinix et al., 2015). The proliferation of survey experiments is multidimensional in the sense that different population samples are being used within modern experimental research designs.

Field experiments have been used by scholars in the social sciences to undercover how a treatment affects on an object of study in a naturally occurring process. Baldassarri and Abascal (2017) state that experiments are useful for advancing middle-range theoretical frameworks. Hainmueller et al. (2014) state that the three leading journals in political science have published seventy-two articles with survey experiments between the years 2006 to 2010. The authors also noted that field experiments can provide evidence for causal effects of variables of interest and can put forth information about social policies. A quote provided by Baldassarri and Abascal (2017) summarizes the goal of the research design featured in these analyses: "We define a field experiment as a data collection strategy that employs manipulation and random assignment to investigate preferences and behaviors in naturally occurring contexts" (Pg. 43). In other words,

we use a random assignment process when evaluating our treatment and analyze responses that come naturally. Scholars tend to agree that survey experiments can be a useful alternative to field experiments (Mullinix et al., 2015; Wulff and Villadsen, 2019). The present study uses an experimental design in a survey scenario to manipulate aspects of an independent variable to understand its effect on a dependent variable in a naturally occurring setting.

Topics covered in political psychology that utilize survey experiments include immigration, get-out-the-vote, social networks, political institutions, prejudice and discrimination, audit and correspondence, and abortion attitudes experiments (Baldassarri and Abascal, 2017; Broockman et al., 2017). There have been experiments performed on leader image and vote outcome as well (Banerjee et al., 2014). In this study, we focus on immigration and leader image to understand attitudes toward immigration enforcement in the contemporary United States. Reviewing some past studies regarding immigration is useful. To begin, Hainmueller and Hopkins (2014) address the wide range of studies and their results pertaining to immigration that revolve either around political economy or political psychology topics. In the American context, there have been a few conjoint experimental research designs that have examined attitudes toward immigration (Hainmueller and Hopkins, 2014; Hainmueller et al, 2014; Hainmueller and Hopkins, 2015; Bansak et al., 2018). Typically, these research designs have included a hypothetical vignette that focus on ideas about immigration and how people respond to them. For example, Hainmueller and Hopkins (2015) use a vignette that purposes hypothesized background characteristics such as prior trips to the U.S., reason for application, country of origin, language skills, profession, job experience, employment plans, education level, and gender, then analyze the responses of individuals regarding letting these particular

immigrants into the United States. Brader et al. (2008) examine how elite rhetoric influences immigration attitudes and policy in their nationally representative experiment. The authors point out that information about the costs of immigration increases white opposition toward Latino rather than European immigrants. A combination of emotional reactions and group cues influences threat perceptions of certain immigrants. Immigration and immigration threat perceptions have oscillated over time as being one of the most-important issues facing the United States (Brader et al., 2008; Tichenor, 2009).

Much research has been performed on various immigration threat perceptions in different scenarios (Schweitzer et al., 2005; Louis et al., 2007; Burns and Gimpel, 2000). More generally, there are three main threat perceptions that arise from immigration: economic insecurity, physical insecurity, and cultural insecurity. Regarding perceived economic threats, in-group populations perceive out-group populations as a threat to the nation's economic well-being, or more particularly, labor-market competition for the in-group population (Hainmueller and Hopkins, 2014; Malhotra et al., 2013; Meuleman, 2011; Citrin et al., 1997; Esses et al., 2012). Simply put, the increase of immigrants takes away potential resources from the native population. The physical security threat argument states that immigrants are or can become criminals that threaten the physical security of citizens of a nation (Canetti-Nisim et al., 2008; Lowry, 2002; Alexseev, 2006). Put another way, immigrants have been increasing viewed as terrorists or criminals, depending on the racial or ethnic characteristics of certain immigrant groups. Finally, there has been a lot of scholarship on immigration and cultural threats. Immigrants are a threat to nation's culture, traditions and values (Newman et al., 2012; Manevska and Achterberg, 2013; Ben-Nun Bloom et al., 2015). Different language and

communication stimuli have been highlighted as a barrier, or threat to natives posed by immigrants. To summarize, multiple theoretical arguments have been advanced for why in-group populations feel threatened by out-group populations.

Keeping these immigration threat distinctions in mind, this analysis fills in a gap in the literature by analyzing the interplay between leader image and immigration threat beliefs, and their effect on immigration enforcement. Much of the literature either concentrates on one or two rival explanations, but not necessarily all three threat perceptions arguments. Furthermore, many studies do not examine attitudes toward immigration enforcement. Therefore, this study addresses individuals' perceptions of immigration enforcement based on both threat perceptions and leader image. The research design addresses if Americans support immigration enforcement based on a perceived threat that they experience while thinking about immigrants coming to this country or if a political leader were to speak on immigration enforcement policies, such a President Trump has, would Americans be in more or less favor of immigration enforcement policies? More generally, how Americans view immigration enforcement could depend on how a primed leader image revolves around framed arguments related to immigration threats. The rest on the paper presents empirical evidence for what best explains variation in immigration enforcement attitudes based on a survey experiment research design. The survey experiment combines the leader image and immigration threat literature together to understand whether individuals rely on cues and heuristics from political leaders to makes judgements about immigration enforcement issues.

The basic theoretical argument implies that support for immigration enforcement is a function of leader image and particular types of perceived immigration threats. Statements by

political leaders based on certain perceived immigration threats can influence attitudes toward immigration enforcement. A theoretical framework for these analyses is derived from previous studies on immigration threats and leader image. We argue that priming Trump's image around certain immigration threat perceptions explain variation in the support for immigration enforcement. Specifically, framing economic, physical security, and cultural threat perceptions around illegal immigrants leads while referencing President Trump, influences support for the ICE.

Research Design

Data

To address what influences attitudes towards immigration enforcement, we will use survey data from the 2019 Cooperative Congressional Election Study to undercover whether leader image and various immigration threats influence support for immigration. YouGov, a leading public opinion research company administers the CCES surveys to representative national samples of the American electorate every year. YouGov employs national internet surveys using a sampling frame that consists of actively recruited participants rather than volunteers. The sample size equals 1000, with respondents coming all regions of the United States. The resulting national sample is representative of the U.S. electorate.

Dependent Variable

The dependent variable in the following analysis is support for ICE measured by what respondents think of the agency on a 1 to 5 scale ranging from strongly approve to strongly disapprove. Respondents in the 2019 CCES were asked whether they wanted ICE to be abolished. The dependent variable specifically asks whether the United States Immigration and

Customs Enforcement agency is necessary with 5 indicating strong support for this statement and 1 indicating strong disapproval. Thus, higher ratings indicate support for the immigration enforcement agency. More specifically, the variable is coded as 5 for "Strongly Agree" and 4 for "Agree" with regard to support for abolishing ICE. A score of 3 indicates "Neither agree nor disagree." Scores of 2 and 1 refer to "Disagree" and "Strongly Disagree" in relation to support for ICE. The dependent variable is an ordinal variable. We also use models with 3 and 2 categories for the dependent variable to investigate how robust the statistical results are.

Survey Experiment

The survey experiment featured in this research examines how priming political leaders support for ICE based on how the agency curbs potential threats illegal immigrants pose to Americans due to the framing of the information provided to respondents. The priming aspect of the question provided will be if President Trump or "some people" make a statement of support for ICE. The statement frames whether ICE is making the United States more secure with regard to physical security, economic security or cultural security. There are seven questions in total with one question being a baseline level of support for ICE. Below are the specific questions asked in the experiment. As indicated above, the response categories range from strongly agree to strongly disagree:

1. *President Trump argues that the Immigration and Customs Enforcement Agency (ICE) is necessary to protect the US against illegal immigrants who are criminals or terrorists. Do you agree or disagree?*

2. *Some people argue that the Immigration and Customs Enforcement Agency (ICE) is necessary to protect the US against illegal immigrants who are criminals or terrorists. Do you agree or disagree?*

3. *President Trump argues that the Immigration and Customs Enforcement Agency (ICE) is necessary to protect the US against illegal immigrants who take away jobs from US citizens. Do you agree or disagree?*

4. *Some people argue that the Immigration and Customs Enforcement Agency (ICE) is necessary to protect the US against illegal immigrants who take away jobs from US citizens. Do you agree or disagree?*

5. *President Trump argues that the Immigration and Customs Enforcement Agency (ICE) is necessary to protect the US against illegal immigrants who don't speak English and threaten America's culture and way of life. Do you agree or disagree?*

6. *Some people argue that the Immigration and Customs Enforcement Agency (ICE) is necessary to protect the US against illegal immigrants who don't speak English. Do you agree or disagree?*

7. *The Immigration and Customs Enforcement Agency (ICE) is necessary to protect the US against illegal immigrants. Do you agree or disagree?*

As discussed, the framing of the questions is designed to determine which perceived threat is the most influential at explaining support for immigration enforcement. Are Americans more concerned with the potential economic, physical security, or cultural threats regarding increases in immigrant populations? Economic threats could be associated with how migrants might take away jobs or economic resources from American citizens. Physical security threats could be associated with how immigrants might perform criminal acts that harm American citizens. Cultural threats are related to how Americans feel about how immigrants influencing language use. In addition, I investigate how priming President Trump's image influences how individuals feel about immigration. People who receive the "Trump Treatment," may feel more strongly about the issue regardless of their stance on it.

The experiment is designed to address which perceived threat from immigration has the strongest effect on attitudes towards attitudes towards ICE. The topics that the survey experiment addresses is which type of threat is correlated most strongly with wanting to abolish ICE and whether individuals rely on cues and heuristics from leader image to make a judgement about ICE.

Predictor Variables

The main independent variables in the following analysis are meant to capture factors associated with whether a respondent received the Trump Treatment, how much a respondent likes Trump on a 0 to 10 scale, and the interaction of these variables. Also, I include the physical security, economic, and cultural threat treatments in the statistical models. I also account for how religious a person is, whether someone views crime as a top three issue facing the nation, economic evaluations, and whether a respondent feels left behind as measured by comparing national and personal economic evaluations. The economic evaluation factor scores follow Clarke and Stewart (1995). I use a racial resentment scale developed by Kinder and Sears (1981). The racial resentment question battery that allows scholars to measure racial intolerance. Finally, I control for socio-economic status and other political and demographic variables. Specifically, I account for family income, education, gender, liberal-conservative ideology, partisan identification (Republican, Democrat, or other party), and whether the respondent is African American, Hispanic, or another race/ethnicity.

Methodology

The analyses employ the 2019 Cooperative Congressional Election Survey data. I use ordered logit statistical models to investigate which factors influence support for the abolishment of the United States Immigration and Customs Enforcement. To test the robustness of the effects of various predictors, I examine how effects change as various combinations of independent variables are employed Young and Holsteen (2017) These authors create a statistical estimator that uses every possible combination of the predictor variables to test the robustness of the effect of key independent variables of interest. Also, I use a standard logit model when using a two-

categorical dependent variable. There are multiple statistical models employed to determine how leader image and immigration threats influence support for the institution of ICE.

Along with reporting multivariate statistical results, I present basic crosstabulations between the survey experiment groups. Specifically, we examine whether there are statistically significant differences between groups that receive various treatments. Reporting the crosstabulations will help to illustrate treatment effects across groups.

Descriptive Statistics

This section provides basic descriptive statistics associated with the data and gives an idea of the distribution of attitudes regarding the support for ICE and various threat perceptions. Providing the distributions of support for ICE based on immigration threats and their interaction with leader image, will provide motivation for the theoretical arguments present in this analysis. I first provide basic descriptive information about the groups. Treatment 1 (T1), Treatment 3 (T3), and Treatment 5 (T5) are the economic, physical security, and cultural threats, respectively, with the Trump treatment. Treatment 2 (T2), Treatment 4 (T4), and Treatment 6 (T6) are the economic, physical security, and cultural threats, respectively, without the Trump treatment. Treatment 7 (T7) is the baseline group without the Trump or immigration threat treatments. Again, the first pair of treatments are economically related, the second pair are security related, and the third pair are associated with culture, with the seventh treatment being the baseline treatment or control group. The N for T1 is 133, the N for T2 is 131, the N for T3 is 159, the N for T4 is 162, the N for T5 is 152, the N for T6 is 136, and the N for T7 is 127. Respondents were assigned to the various groups at random.

Figure 4.1 displays the basic distribution of the survey experiment results. The first noticeable difference among the Trump and non-Trump treatment groups is that, in all immigration threat scenarios, the strongly disagree category has more respondents in the groups with the Trump treatment than otherwise. It seems as though Trump's statements were met with more extreme reactions than when just "some people" make the statement on a certain immigration threat. In other words, there is more of a negative reaction across all categories to the Trump treatment groups relative to the non-Trump groups. In relation to specific immigration threats, close to a majority of respondents believe that immigrants are economic threats and that is why ICE is needed. For physical security threats, there is less agreement about the need for ICE. Nonetheless, close to a majority of respondents believe that ICE is needed to protect Americans against criminals and terrorists. Finally, the most variation can be seen with regard to cultural threats. When Trump is mentioned, a majority of people disagree that ICE is needed for cultural threats brought forth by immigrants, however, when "some people" make the statement, then the majority of respondents agree that ICE is necessarily to protect Americans from this threat.
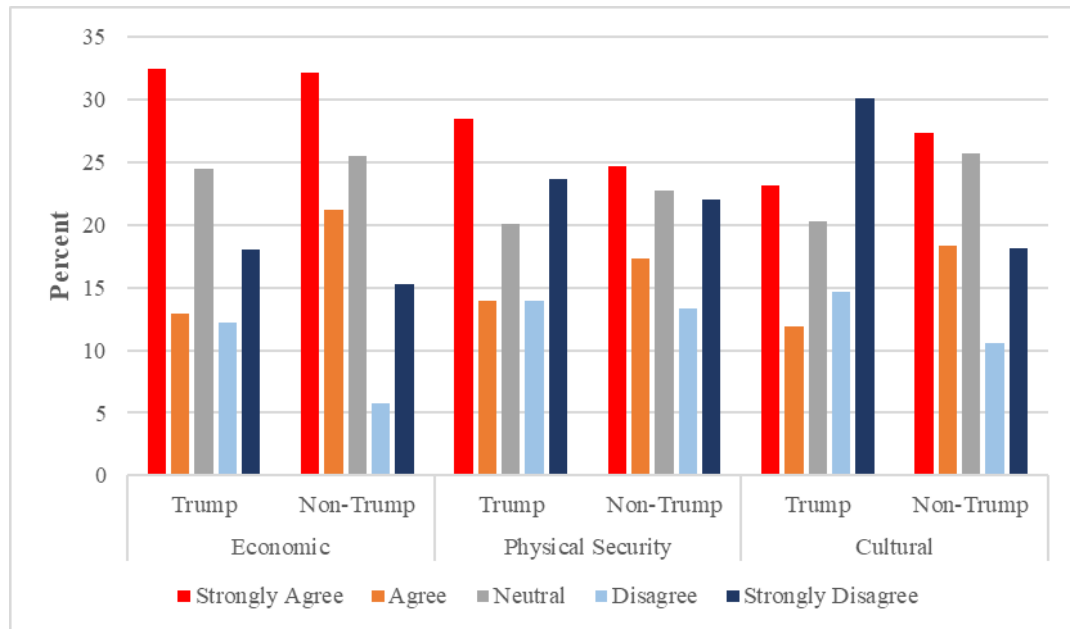
Figure 4.1: Distribution of Survey Experiment Results

I investigate whether these groups are from each other using Pearson's Chi-Square test. I analyze whether the treatment groups are different with respect to the baseline group, different in relation to Trump treatment and non-Trump treatment groups, and different regarding all Trump treatment and non-Trump treatment groups. In sum, I find statistically significant relationships among some of the treatment groups. Figure 4.2 displays the relationships among groups based on Pearson's Chi Square test.

	Chi-Square	Cramer's V	N		Chi-Square	Cramer's V	N
T1 & T7	0.388	0.388	281	*T1 & T2*	0.258	0.258	276
T2 & T7	0.674	0.674	279	*T3 & T4*	0.611	0.611	294
T3 & T7	**0.044**	**0.044**	286	*T5 & T6*	**0.055**	**0.055**	288
T4 & T7	0.293	0.293	292	*T2 & T4*	0.144	0.144	287
T5 & T7	**0.004**	**0.004**	285	*T2 & T6*	0.216	0.216	282
T6 & T7	0.205	0.205	287	*T4 & T6*	0.395	0.395	295

Figure 4.2: Association Between Treatment Groups

97

Figure 4.2 illustrates that three of the fourteen-group combinations have statistically significant differences between those who received both the Trump and physical security treatment, the Trump and cultural treatment, and between both groups that received the cultural treatment. Overall, the results suggest that the Trump treatment paired with both the physical security and cultural treatments produce statistically distinct differences among the groups. Both groups that received the cultural treatments with and without the Trump treatment are significant different from each other. In relation to all other pairs, there are no statistically significant distinctions or associations.

Figure 4.1 and Figure 4.2 provide initial empirical evidence that both Trump's image and the type of immigration threat influence Americans' attitudes toward immigration enforcement. The distributions and the correlations among the different groups would suggest that Americans are more likely to support immigration enforcement depending on the priming and framing on the issue. In other words, if one primes Trump's image around certain framing of immigration threats, then variation in support for immigration enforcement begins to emerge.

Statistical Model Results

The results of the statistical models indicate that the Trump treatment along with certain types of immigration threat perceptions are influential. We analyze the interaction between Trump's likeness and the Trump treatment, as well as the interaction between the Trump treatment and each one of the immigration threat treatments. Feelings about Trump interacted with each one of the threat perceptions are examined too. Overall, we find support for the idea that the Trump treatment interacted with feelings about him positively influence immigration enforcement approval. We also find that the Trump treatment interacted with the economic threat

perception treatment positively influences support for immigration enforcement. Both these interaction effects have positive, statistically significant relationship with immigration enforcement. Multiple statistical procedures are used to examine the robustness of the effects of Trump's image, immigration threat perceptions, and their interaction on immigration enforcement support.

Results regarding the interaction between feelings about Trump and the Trump treatment are presented first. Specifically, we will present results using logit, ordered logit, and model robustness (Young and Holsteen, 2017) estimators. The dependent variable is support for ICE. The key independent variables of interest are the Trump treatment and the economic, physical security and cultural threat treatments from the survey experiment. We control for feelings about Trump, religiosity, economic evaluations, whether someone views crime as a top three issue facing the nation, and whether someone feels left behind economically and several socio-demographic variables. Table 4.1 presents the results of Model 1, Model 2, and Model 3. Model 1 use a 5 categorical dependent variable, Model 2 uses 3 categories for the dependent variable, and Model 3 uses 2 categories.

Table 4.1: Support for ICE: Trump Treatment * Trump Like

	Model 1	*Model 2*	*Model 3*
Trump Treatment	-.128***	-.154***	-.098**
Trump Like	.126**	.123**	.113*
Trump Treatment * Trump Like	.165***	.174***	.158***
Security Treatment	-.005	0.01	-.025
Economic Treatment	-.118***	-.106**	-.116**
Cultural Treatment	-.121***	-.103**	-.114**
Crime Top-3 Issue	0.021	0.009	0.02
Left behind	0.150***	.079***	.057*
Ideology	.158***	.146***	.103**
Democrat	-.081**	-.084**	-.071*
Republican	-0.015	-0.005	.075*

Table 4.1 continued

Other Party ID	-.076***	-.069**	-0.022
Black	0.04	0.034	-0.008
Hispanic	-.061**	-.056*	-0.04
Other Race	-0.007	-.022	0.003
Age	.072***	.059*	.126***
Gender	0.005	0.013	.059*
Education	-0.015	-0.028	0.006
Income	.047*	.050*	.093***
Religiosity	.070**	.091***	.106***
Racial Resentment	.283***	.257***	.171***
Economic Evaluations	0.052	0.039	0.022
N	1000	1000	1000
R	0.569	0.527	0.436

Note on P-Value: *.05, **.01, ***.001

In Model 1, the variables that are statistically significant at the .05 alpha level when explaining support for ICE are whether one feels left-behind economically, racial resentment, liberal-conservative ideological orientations, party identification, race-ethnicity, age, annual family income, religiosity, the Trump treatment, how much one likes Trump, the economic threat treatment and the cultural treatments. The variables that are positively associated with support for ICE are feeling left-behind, racial resentment, ideology, age, gender, income, religiosity, feelings about Trump, and the interaction between the Trump treatment and feelings about Trump. The factors that have a negative influence on support for ICE are whether a respondent identifies as a Democrat, whether a respondent identifies with other political parties besides the Republicans or Democrats, whether an individual is Hispanic, the Trump treatment, the cultural treatment, and the economic threat treatment. All other predictor variables do not influence support for immigration enforcement. Model 2 reveals the exact same pattern of results as Model

1. In Model 3, being a Republican becomes significant, while identifying with a party besides the Democratic and Republican parties and being Hispanic lose their significance. Republicans in Model 3 support immigration enforcement. The adjusted R^2 suggests that these models explain from 44 to 57 percent of the variation in support for ICE.

Model 4, Model 5, and Model 6 interact the Trump treatment effect with economic threat perceptions. These models are exactly the same as Model 1, Model 2, and Model 3, except for changing the main interaction effect. Model 4 uses a 5 categorical dependent variable, Model 5 uses 3 categories for the dependent variable, and Model 6 uses 2 categories.

Table 4.2: Support for ICE: Trump Treatment * Economic Treatment

	Model 4	Model 5	Model 6
Trump Treatment	-.070*	-.086**	-.026
Trump Like	.216***	.217***	.198***
Trump Treatment * Economic Treatment	.090**	.083*	0.053
Security Treatment	0.02	0.033	-.006
Economic Treatment	0.153***	-.139***	-.130**
Cultural Treatment	-.098**	-.081*	-.090*
Crime Top-3 Issue	0.025	0.012	0.023
Left behind	.079***	.070**	0.049
Ideology	.157***	.146***	.104**
Democrat	-.088**	-.090**	-.075*
Republican	-0.016	-0.006	.074*
Other Party ID	-.079***	-.072**	-0.025
Black	0.045	0.038	-.005
Hispanic	-.053*	-.047*	-0.033
Other Race	-0.009	-0.023	0.003
Age	.074**	.062*	.129***
Gender	0	0.009	.056*
Education	-0.02	-0.033	0.001
Income	0.050*	.054*	.097***
Religiosity	.065**	.086***	.102***
Racial Resentment	.278***	.252***	.167***
Economic Evaluations	.057*	0.043	0.026
N	1000	1000	1000

Table 4.1 continued

R	0.562	0.519	0.429

*Note on P-Value: *.05, **.01, ***.001*

Overall, there is support for the notion that economic-related immigration threats interacted with Trump's image lead to support for immigration enforcement among respondents controlling for several other factors. Model 4 reveals that economic evaluations, feelings of being left behind economically, racial resentment, ideology, Democrat party identification, "other" party identification, Hispanic ethnicity, age, income, religiosity, the Trump treatment, feelings about Trump, cultural threat treatment, economic threat treatment, and the interaction between economic threat treatment and the Trump treatment are all statistically significant at the .05 level. The variables that have a statistically significant and positive relationship in supporting immigration enforcement are positive economic evaluations, feeling left behind economically, enhanced racial resentment, conservative ideology. Older individuals, wealthier people, more religious people, and individuals who like Trump also are more likely to support immigration enforcement. In addition, the interaction between receiving the Trump treatment and the economic immigration threat treatment has a positive effect.

Factors that are negatively associated with immigration enforcement are being a Democrat, identifying with minor party, being Hispanic, the Trump treatment, the economic threat treatment, and the cultural treatment. All these factors lead to disapproval of ICE. In Model 5, economic evaluations become insignificant. In Model 6, economic evaluations, feeling left behind, "other" party identification, the Trump treatment, and the interaction between the Trump treatment and the economic threat treatment are no longer significant. Being a Republican

and being a man now have a positive influence regarding immigration enforcement support. The adjusted R^2 shows that these models explain from 43 percent to 56 of the variation in support for ICE. Finally, I interact the economic threat treatment with Trump's likeness and the results are almost exactly the same except the Trump treatment no longer is statistically significant.

In addition to the ordered logit and logit models used above, we use a procedure created by Young and Holsteen (2017) to examine the robustness of the variables of interest. In this model, we use a regular OLS regression estimator to estimate the combinations of results, rather than the ordered logit estimator. Two models are estimated, one featuring the Trump treatment and the Trump likeness interaction, and the Trump treatment and the economic threat treatment. For the first model including the Trump treatment and the feelings about Trump interaction, the model estimates over 65,000 regressions based on all combinations of the independent variables. The results suggest that the effects of the Trump treatment and the Trump affect variables are robust across various model specifications. For the interaction between these variables, the term is properly signed in 100% of the regressions estimated and statistically significant in 79% percent of them. In sum, the findings support the hypothesis that feelings about Trump are very influential for what happens when the question about support/opposition to ICE includes a reference to Trump. There is less support for the robustness of the interaction between the Trump treatment and the economic threat treatment with the sign stability being 70% and the significance rate being 22%. In sum, there is more support for the findings supporting the hypothesis that feelings about Trump are very influential for what happens when the question about support/opposition to ICE includes a reference to Trump. There is less support for the hypothesis that referencing Trump along with economic threats influences support for ICE.

Substantive Effects

The following figures show the predicted probabilities for the interaction effects featured. Specifically, the figures show the probability of supporting ICE when the variable of interest, either the Trump Treatment and affect for Trump or the economic threat treatment and affect for Trump's, is shifted from its lowest value to its highest, while holding all other predictor variables at their means. The figures document that when either the economic threat or Trump treatment is interacted with feelings about the President, support for ICE varies significantly - as feelings about Trump become more positive, and a respondent receives either treatment, support for ICE increases.

Figure 4.3 presents the predicted probabilities when respondents receive the Trump treatment and Figure 4.4 shows the predicted probabilities for when respondents receive the economic threat treatment. Figure 4.3 shows that going from strongly negative attitudes to strongly positive attitudes about the President Trump produces a 30 percent change in support for ICE. For Figure 4.4, shifting from strongly positive attitudes to strongly negative attitudes about President Trump reveals about a 30 percent decrease in support for ICE. If an individual perceives Trump in a positive light when receiving the economic threat treatment, then he/she is much more likely to support ICE.
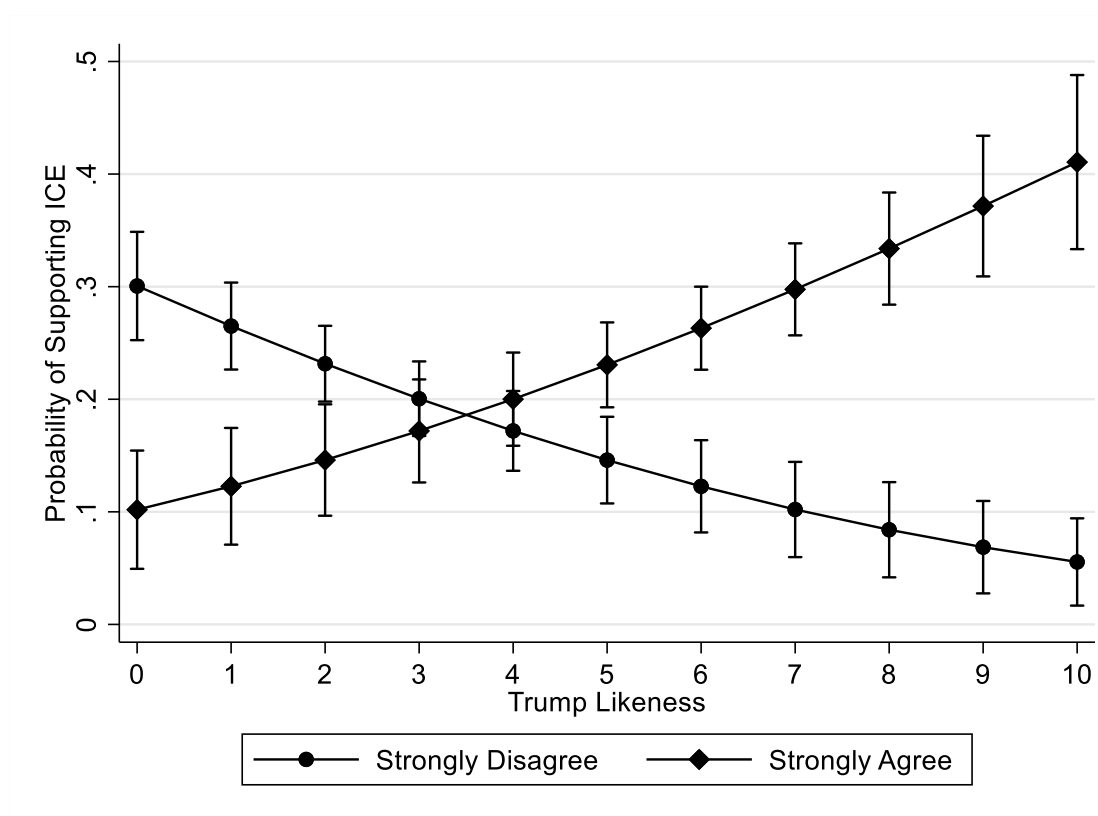
Figure 4.3: Trump Treatment
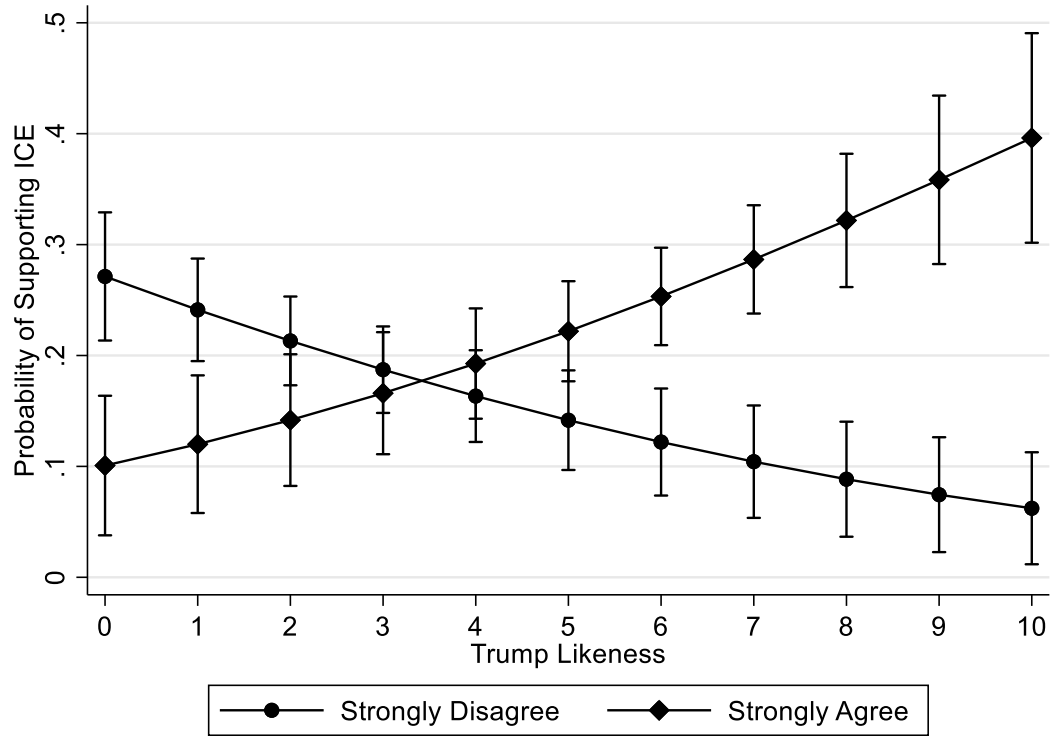
Figure 4.4: Economic Threat Treatment

Summary and Conclusion

There are several implications for the results of the statistical models above. The models analyze support for immigration enforcement based on different types of immigration threats, Trump's image, and several control variables. We analyze whether statements made by President Trump on certain threat issues relating immigration make a difference in the manner in which Americans react to the issue. By using a survey experiment research design administered by the 2019 Cooperative Congressional Election Study, we assess which statements about the type of threats posed by immigration influence if Americans support or oppose ICE. This study aims to determine the effects of an interaction between President Trump's image and economic, security, and cultural threats related to immigration. How individuals perceive salient issues may depend

on how policymakers prime and frame the issues. Generally, we find support for the idea that leader image and certain types of immigration threats influence support for immigration enforcement.

In an era when the electorate is highly polarized, leader image and threat perceptions come together to influence immigration enforcement. The results presented in this paper suggest that spatial-position issues matter when considering support for ICE. In other words, cultural factors, spatial-position, but not crime, a valence issue, influence support for ICE. If the issue is highly polarized, mentioning Trump influences how respondents react. Attitudes toward issues are modified if Trump is associated with the issue.

Using a survey experiment research design, we find general support for the proposition that Americans react to statements on immigration threats by President Trump or "some people" differently. Using seven variations of a question in a survey experiment relating to referencing President Trump and immigration threat perceptions, we illustrate whether priming and framing issues leads to more or less support for ICE. In other words, can political leaders such as President Trump make statements that influence public opinion about various issues? We use three questions that reference President Trump along with three different possible immigration threats. We also use three questions that reference three different immigration threat issues with no mention of the President, and finally, we use a baseline question that does not mention the President or possible immigration threats.

Chi-Square tests reveal statistically significant differences among groups, while the statistical models delineate which factors are associated with support for ICE. Regarding the statistical model results, referencing Trump, referencing a cultural threat, and referencing an

economic threat, all have negative and statistically significant influences on supporting ICE. Once we condition these treatments on how much the respondent (dis)likes Trump, we see different results. In particular, interacting feelings about Trump with the Trump reference and the economic threat treatment, leads to positive and statistically significant support for ICE. Trump's image in the eye of the respondent offsets the survey treatments. More generally, support for Trump translates into support for ICE.

Future studies should concentrate on building a time series of different threat perceptions. Various threat perceptions could be salient at different times. For example, statements made about cultural and security threats of immigrants would have probably been more prevalent around the September 11th, 2001 terrorist attacks. Leading up to the Great Recession starting in 2007, economic threat perceptions associated with illegal immigrants could have become the most-important threat in relation to immigration. When the economy is not the most salient issue facing the nation, other immigration threat perceptions regarding culture and crime could become salient. The salience of different immigration threats at certain points in time could have significant policy ramifications. For example, if individuals perceive immigrants as being a physical security threat to the nation, then policy initiatives such as President Trump's proposal to build a wall at the southern border of the United States may gain more public acceptance and be more easily passed into law.

Also, future studies should expand the present research design to other democracies such as the United Kingdom and Canada. A possible fruitful follow-up study would be using a similar survey experiment in the United Kingdom in the Brexit context. Many politically salient issues that surround the very polarizing subject of Brexit involve immigration and state sovereignty.

People who support Brexit may do so because of what statements political elites are making about various perceived immigration threats. Also, either a cultural, economic, or physical threat could be particularly relevant among those that support the United Kingdom leaving in European Union. In increasingly polarized electorates, survey experiments such as the one used in this paper can help reveal the origins of feelings about immigration and immigration enforcement in various political contexts.

CHAPTER 5

IMMIGRATION ENFORCEMENT AND FUTURE RESEARCH

The United States immigration and enforcement policies have varied over time regarding how restrictive they are. In this dissertation, we enhanced the understanding of relationships between support/opposition to President Trump, attitudes towards immigrants and the immigration enforcement agency (ICE), and contributed to knowledge of the etiology and consequences of public opinion on highly salient and deeply divisive issues that dominate political discourse in contemporary America. The goal of this research was to contribute to the knowledge on leader image and immigration by understanding properties of each factor and how they interact. By addressing these factors, we have developed three thematically related research designs aimed at understanding aspects of each phenomena.

Summary of Dissertation

The dissertation is divided into three main research analyses. Paper 1 analyzes support for abolishing Immigration and Customs Enforcement Agency (ICE). Paper 2 analyzes how immigration attitudes influence support for President Trump. Finally, Paper 3 performs an experiment that addresses how voters' attitudes towards President Trump affect how they react to statements related to perceived threats of immigration and support/opposition for ICE. The main theme throughout these analyses is that immigration and leader image are interrelated. The novel aspect of this dissertation is that it analyzes support for ICE and immigration enforcement, which not much research has been performed on to date.

In the first analysis, we explain variation in wanting to abolish ICE. Cooperative Congressional Election Study survey data gathered in 2018 is utilized to address the research question of which Americans support the abolishment of ICE. The dependent variable is whether one supports the abolishment of ICE on a 5-point scale ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree. Analyzing the data with regard to this phenomenon and developing statistical models helps us illustrate that those that are more tolerant of illegal immigrations while controlling for party identification, ideology, and their interaction. More specifically, negative attitudes toward immigrants lead to support to abolish ICE and more liberal individuals support abolishing ICE. Those respondents who think the economy is not performing well, are more likely to support abolishing ICE. Positive racial attitudes lead to support for abolishing ICE. Regarding the control variables, younger people, women, less wealthy, and less well-educated individuals all support abolishing ICE.

Support for President Trump is analyzed in the second paper. Cooperative Congressional Election Study survey data gathered in 2018 is utilized to address the research question of which Americans support the abolishment of ICE. The dependent variable is whether one supports the job performance of President Trump on a 5-point scale ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree. This research design addresses rival vote choice models when explaining support for Trump during the 2018 midterm elections. This study illustrates that spatial-position issues explain the most variation in support for Trump. Policy proximity to candidates, racial attitudes, immigration attitudes, abortion, and health care policy issues are considered to be spatial-position issues in the contemporary United States. All of these factors are correlated with Trump's approval. A valence issue - feelings about the economy - is also correlated with

Trump's approval. In addition, several demographic characteristics such as racial/ethnic composition, gender, age, education and region of residence are correlated with support for President Trump. Finally, there are policy issues that respondents care about that correlate with Trump's approval. Student loan debt, the environment, health care, immigration, inequality, law and order, racism, terrorism, and moral values are all correlated with support for the President.

A survey experiment was used in the third paper to investigate support for ICE. In the survey experiment administered by the 2019 Cooperative Congressional Election Study, we discern which statements on the type of threats from immigration influence how Americans mentally process the issue when we reference President Trump relative to "some people." The dependent variable is feelings toward ICE on a 5-point scale ranging from strongly agreeing or strongly disagreeing that ICE is a necessary bureaucratic institution. There are statistically significant differences among groups based on whether one references Trump and a specific immigration threat relating to the economy, physical security, or culture. In the statistical model results, referencing Trump, referencing a cultural threat, and referencing an economic threat, all lead to negative and statistically significant influence for supporting ICE. Once we condition these treatments on how much a respondent likes Trump, we begin to see different results. In particular, interacting affect liking Trump and the economic threat treatment, leads to positive and statistically significant support for ICE. Trump's image in the eye of the respondent offsets the survey treatments. More generally, support for Trump translates into support for ICE.

More analyses could be performed regarding immigration and leader image. There are several limitations to the research designs used in the above analyses. Mainly, all the data examined are cross-sectional rather than time series data. In the first two analyses, I am

112

addressing correlations between variables, while the survey experiment helps to determine cause and effect relationships. The analyses in papers one and two do not show any type of cause and effect relationship among immigration enforcement and leader image. Moreover, the data are from a certain period in time in which a lot of underlying factors that happen overtime cannot be accounted for. It would be a faulty assumption to suggest that immigration enforcement policies are stable and that attitudes toward immigration enforcement do not change. Within the United States, there may be periods when the public wants more immigration enforcement and there may be periods when less restrictive enforcement policies are tolerated. Moreover, there may be periods of time where certain immigration threat perceptions are heightened, whether it be economic, security, cultural threats. Simple cross-sectional data do not address any of these changes overtime time and are limited in regard to what explains these changes.

The statistical results from the models in each one of the research designs has implications for research done in both the immigration and image leader fields of study. More generally, scholars have not addressed support for ICE or immigration enforcement. These studies begin to address a gap in the literature that does not examine support for policies related to immigration enforcement. An individual could have a positive outlook toward immigrants and nonetheless support strict immigration enforcement policies. In the first paper, I begin to broach the question of what influences support for the Abolish ICE movement. I illustrate which factors are correlated with wanting to abolish ICE. In the second paper, I examine how immigration attitudes influence support for President Trump. The analysis illustrates that people who have negative attitudes toward immigrants are more likely to support President Trump. Spatial-issue

positions such as immigration seem to fit the data the best when explaining support for President Trump.

The final analysis makes the biggest contribution in the dissertation to the studies on immigration and image leader by interacting them together in one analysis. The survey experiment captures cause and effect relationships regarding support for immigration enforcement. The randomness of the immigration threat treatments along with the Trump treatment reference, influences support for ICE controlling for several other factors. The Trump treatment along with the economic threat treatment, when conditioned on liking Trump, influence support for immigration enforcement. In other words, if a person receives the economic threat treatment or Trump treatment reference, and if a respondent is fond of President Trump, then respondents begin to support ICE. There is support for the notion that priming Trump's image around certain immigration threat perceptions influences support immigration enforcement. Referencing Trump or immigration threats alone does not lead to positive support for ICE. In this survey experiment, conditioning these treatments on leader image likeness produces support for ICE. Although the data do not address cause and effect overtime, it does provide evidence that priming and framing immigration issues influences support for certain immigration policies.

Future research

All the analyses can be further developed in the future. Regarding paper one, future studies should address how certain religions in different regions influence support for the abolish ICE movement. Along the lines of the "Christian Nationalist" argument, I would suspect that Southern Baptist or Evangelicals would be less supportive of the abolish ICE movement. I

114

produced results that suggested that more religious individuals support the abolish ICE movement. Which religions and where now need to be addressed in relation to the research question. Furthermore, perhaps survey waves could be developed to address the cause and effect relationships relating to abolishing ICE. I further suspect that support for the abolish ICE movement has varied overtime in response to domestic political events. Moreover, there could be a particular immigration threat associated with the abolish ICE movement. Specifically, those who believe that immigrants are a physical security threat to the United States could be less willing to want to abolish ICE. Or perhaps, the interaction between perceptions of immigrants as being economic threats to the United States and a respondent's evaluations of the economy will lead less support for the abolishment of ICE. Other individuals could be concerned about cultural and physical security immigration threat aspects, but still support the abolishment of ICE.

Future research regarding the second paper could examine how rival voting models apply to legislative candidates in the 2018 midterm, or in the 2022 midterm elections. More generally, examining the dynamics of these rival vote models overtime in relation to President Trump's approval will further undercover cause and effect relationship patterns. Simply put, scholars could analyze if there is a trickle-down effect regarding support for the executive, and lower-office political candidates. Can executive approval have an influence on a "Red Wave" or "Blue Wave," or are these mutually exclusive phenomena? Addressing this question could unpack what happens between presidential elections and why. Moreover, do those who perceive some issue as being the most important, vote in the same manner for candidates at different levels. Issues at one level and at one point in time could cause a voter to support different political candidates at various office levels. In other words, if one thinks that the economy is the most important issue,

will they vote for candidates at each level that they perceive will get the economy in better shape, regardless of political affiliation? More generally, addressing these questions in the future will undercover further political behavior of Americans. Disaggregated data or data that covers local, state, and federal elections overtime could be used to further address research questions that have spawned from this analysis.

Regarding the survey experiment, or the third paper analyses, the research design should be applied to other contexts. Future research should use a similar survey experiment in the United Kingdom or Brexit context. Many politically salient issues that surround the very polarizing subject of Brexit involve immigration and state sovereignty. Persons who support Brexit may be doing so because of what statement political elites are making about various perceived immigration threats. Also, either a cultural, economic, or physical threat could be particularly relevant among those that support the United Kingdom leaving in European Union. Furthermore, future studies should concentrate on building a time series on different threat perceptions. Various threat perceptions could be salient at certain times. When the economy is not the most salient issue facing the nation, other immigration threat perceptions regarding culture and crime could be salient. The salience of immigration threats at certain points in time could have significant policy ramifications. For example, if individuals perceive immigrants as being a physical security threat to the nation, then policy proposals such as President Trump's proposal to build a wall at the southern border of the United States may be more easily passed.

The dissertation that was developed utilized Cooperative Congressional Election Study survey data administered by YouGov. I encourage future scholars to develop more survey experiments to address the etiology of immigration enforcement or collect disaggregated data

116

overtime in relation to various types of immigration threats. Obviously, a multi-wave panel that could examine some naturally occurring phenomenon in relation to immigration threats would be particularly useful for addressing immigration and immigration policy support. An economic recession would be an ideal phenomenon to build a multi-wave panel around. Put simply, economic threat perceptions coming from immigrants and immigration should increase as an economic recession becomes worse. Several advances when studying the causes and consequences of immigration and leader image can be made if scholars can start collecting quality data overtime. Conducting these studies in various contexts will be especially useful considering the increase in populist governments around the world.

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BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Blake Hoffman was born in Austin, Texas. He earned a degree from Texas A&M University with a Bachelor of Arts in Political Science. To further his education, he enrolled into the PhD Political Science program at The University of Texas at Dallas. In addition to receiving his PhD in Political Science in May 2020, he will be graduating with a Master of Science in Social Data Analytics and Research.

CURRICULUM VITAE

Education

PhD., Political Science, University of Texas at Dallas (expected 2020)

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BA, *Magna Cum Laude*, Political Science, Texas A&M University, December 2015

Skills

- Proficient in use of Microsoft Word, PowerPoint, Excel, Stata, and R.
- Data Entry
- Familiarity with statistical programs such as SPSS, Excel, RATS, and Eviews
- Multivariate Regression, Time Series, and Bayesian Analysis
- Teaching/Lecturing

Work Experience

Texas A&M University Student Worker II, College Station, Texas

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University of Texas at Dallas Teaching/Research Assistant, Richardson, Texas

Sponsorships & Awards

University of Texas at Dallas Summer 2016 Sponsorship- University of Essex Summer School in Social Science Data Analysis statistics course on Dynamic Modeling (Times Series Analysis)

Publications

Hoffman, Blake, et al. "What's So Peaceful about Asian Peace?." *Asian International Studies Review* 19.1 (2018): 49-73.

Research and Teaching Interests
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