

The Great Flight: Political Corruption as a Trigger for Mexican Emigration

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ABSTRACT

Political corruption is a phenomenon that has plagued most societies. However, its contribution as a push factor in modern Mexican and Central American migration research must be addressed. Despite public opinion data such as LAPOP's Americas Barometer illustrating the frequency and disdain of civilians' interaction with petty corruption and gross distrust in the executive and legislative branches of government, research in the field remains relatively unexplored. The Migration Policy Institute has added to limited cross-sectional research in the field by demonstrating that corruption contributes at least to some extent to emigration desires. This study utilized structured interviews to measure the extent to which political corruption influenced emigration for ten immigrants from Mexico and Central America. It found that US foreign policy serves as a significant pull factor by encouraging migrants to immigrate and permanently settle in the US. Additionally, the study found that although corruption was not the primary factor motivating emigration, it was an underlying factor in migrants' search for safety and security in the United States.

Keywords: political corruption, US immigration policy, push factors, pull factors, Mexican immigration, Central American immigration

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I. INTRODUCTION

Immigration has become a controversial labor and social issue in the United States, impacting the present and future country's economy and society. Contemporary issues of immigration have expanded to topics of safety, job security, legality, and immigrants' intentions. Following Donald Trump's 2016 presidential win, Mexican immigrants became a scapegoat for increasing security and safety precautions along the U.S-Mexican southern border. Republicans and far-right media identified Mexican migrants as rapist opportunists seeking to undermine the United States' economy and society. Yet many of these outlets failed to contextualize corruption in Mexico's political and socio-economic state as a contributing factor to increasing trends in Mexican emigration.

Scholars have consistently attributed prominent levels of Mexican immigration to America as a result of factors such as labor migration. While labor migration is demonstrated as one of the main factors that influence migration, there are a wide array of factors that can cause Mexicans to emigrate. The typical push factors that affect Mexican citizens to emigrate include the lack of economic opportunity, proximity to the United States, lax emigration structures, and political and public violence. In addition, pull factors influence migrants to come to the U.S. They include U.S. economic development and U.S. immigration legislation of family reunification, IRCA amnesty, citizenship by birth, and refugee policies. Researchers find that most immigrants migrate in search of better economic opportunities rather than due to a lack of safety and security

and the ineffectiveness of their home countries' governments. Data like LAPOP's 2021 AmericasBarometer, illustrates how economic opportunity is the most cited reason for migrating. (Lupu, Rodriguez, and Zechmeister (Eds.) 2021, 4). As a result, I aim to add to the limited research on corruption and immigration based on this information.

One factor not discussed in literature on migration is corruption. Mexico has long suffered high levels of corruption, with its CPI rating ranking at 31 on a scale from 0, highly corrupt, to 100, very clean, since 2019 (Transparency International 2020). Additionally, bribery and solicitation have historically been incorporated into Mexico's political culture through clientelism. Allen Hicken notes clientelism as a system "characterized by the combination of particularistic targeting and contingency based on exchange (Hicken 2011)." This process results in a political system where politicians or government officials receive bribes or bribe others for political and economic gains. LAPOP's 2021 AmericasBarometer demonstrated that across Latin America, bribe solicitation was the highest in Mexico, and men, younger, better educated, and wealthier individuals were most likely to be victimized by police (Lupu, Rodriguez, and Zechmeister (Eds.) 2021, 35, 36). Corruption has also penetrated public servants, with a 12-point increase in bribery since 2006 and has historically supplemented lower wages across the country (Lupu, Rodriguez, and Zechmeister (Eds.) 2021, 68).

With only less than two percent of crimes solved in Mexico, violent crime perpetrated by drug trafficking and criminal organizations has overloaded the justice system, increased corruption, and decreased efforts toward targeting impunity (Human Rights Watch 2021). Across Mexico, citizens reported having little to no confidence in the government's ability to protect them, including entrusting them to uphold the law.

From 2016 to 2018, concerns over impunity ranked higher than common concerns such as narco-trafficking with corruption on the rise. In addition, underreporting has been a challenge to targeting impunity, with it being highest for cases of extortion which represented 99% of cases in 2014. The 2016 ENVIPE results demonstrated that 63 percent of citizens did not report a crime for reasons attributable to authorities, and 33 percent did not report because they said it was a waste of time (Instituto Nacional De Estadística y Geografía 2016, 28; Luengo-Cabrera and Butler 2017). Seventeen percent claimed that it was due to distrust in authorities (Instituto Nacional De Estadística y Geografía 2016, 28; Luengo-Cabrera and Butler 2017).

Additionally, 50.4 percent of those who did report crimes claimed that they were treated poorly or very severely by authorities (Luengo-Cabrera and Butler 2017, 28). Extortion is such a customary practice that when citizens do not comply, they are unable to get anything done. For example, bribes are customary in Mexico's business culture. If citizens are not compliant in providing them, they face barriers in registering businesses, entering the market, and constant harassment (Inskeep 2012).

Impunity is central to the increase in Mexican asylum seekers; however, Mexican migrants face barriers both in the United States and in Mexico when seeking asylum. J. Cabot cites that in 2013, "Mexicans made up the second-largest group of defensive asylum seekers (those in removal proceedings) in the United States, behind Chinese citizens seeking asylum in the United States (Cabot 2014)." These increases can be linked directly to Calderon's drug war due to militarized violence splintering efforts of drug trafficking, forcing such organizations to expand their activities through extortion and kidnapping (Cabot 2014). It has been estimated that more than 130,000 people were

killed between 2007 and 2012 during Calderon's war on drugs in Mexico (Molloy 2013). Cartel violence has even forced people to flee their homes to travel to the United States or within regions of Mexico, leaving behind ghost' towns (Suárez 2021). With the recent development of Donald Trump's "Stay in Mexico" program, Mexican asylum seekers are deported to Mexico to await hearings resulting in many seekers losing their cases after missing scheduled court dates (Suárez 2021, Human Rights Watch 2021). Interviewees have reported that they are afraid of reporting crimes and abuse to Mexican authorities (due to their connections with the cartel) and cannot receive important documents, get health care, or send their children to school. Most migrants are forced to seek refuge in border camps around the southern border. However, they are subject to solicitation and human rights abuses from the respective state's government, which often block access into these communities (Human Rights Watch 2021). Additionally, in U.S. proceedings, their cases are subject to multiple reviewing procedures that can be corroborated to disprove a person's credible fear claim of persecution.

Research concerning Mexican immigration has focused on labor migration while neglecting recent political phenomena, such as corruption, which have contributed to increasing trends in asylum-seeking proceedings. Corruption has become synonymous with the Mexican government. Bribery, clientelism, and the effects of politics have embedded dishonesty into the state's systems resulting in citizens' lack of trust in its authenticity resulting in fewer people willing to report crimes or entrust government authorities in protecting them.

II. MEXICAN AND CENTRAL AMERICAN IMMIGRATION TO THE UNITED STATES

a. Mexican Immigration to the United States

Mexican-U.S. migration has long predated borders and has been characterized by the ebb and flow of labor and political and socioeconomic factors such as crises. The United States has historically used Mexican labor to supplement agricultural industries. Most notably, the 1964 Bracero Program offered temporary visas and labor contracts to young, able-bodied Mexican men. Through this program, Mexican men migrated to southwestern states, like Texas and California, to work in agriculture or on railroads (Britannica, T. Editors of Encyclopaedia). However, as civil unrest pursued following the Great Depression and World War II, the perception of Mexican workers quickly changed from one of essential workers to threats to U.S. citizens, who blamed them for stealing jobs (Britannica, T. Editors of Encyclopaedia). As a result, the U.S. government continuously sponsored mass deportation campaigns, such as the pejoratively named “Operation Wetback,” to alleviate civil unrest. This phenomenon has continued to characterize U.S. sentiments concerning Mexican and Central American migration.

The end of the Mexican Miracle, a series of economic policies that sparked economic growth, NAFTA, and heightened U.S. immigration enforcement, has affected modern trends in Mexican migration. Beginning in the 1960s, U.S. firms outsourced manufacturing operations to cheaper, less regulated areas of northern Mexico, Asia, and the Caribbean, which guaranteed their ability to use exploitative labor practices not allowed in the U.S. (Fernández-Kelly and Massey 2007, 100). The Mexican government

encouraged establishing assembly plants along the border; by the 1980s, two-thirds of foreign investment was concentrated along the wall (PBS 2002). Despite their establishment during the 1960s, the Maquiladora Program would not boom until the economic crisis of the 1980s in Mexico. As a result, investment opportunities dwindled in U.S. markets because labor was being outsourced to Mexico (Fernández-Kelly and Massey 2007, 100). Simultaneously, Latin American countries wished to achieve economic independence using ISI (Import Substitution Industrialization) policies and loans from U.S. banks. However, they were adversely affected following the U.S. Federal Reserve interest rate increase to more than twenty percent (Fernández-Kelly and Massey 2007). Mexico successfully became one of the world's largest oil producers during this period. The Mexican government established international credit with increasing oil prices, which induced massive increases in government borrowing and spending followed by inflation (PBS 2002). As interest rates and spending rose, investors lost confidence and converted their Mexican pesos to dollars, devaluing the peso (Fernández-Kelly and Massey 2007). As a result, Mexico could no longer meet its loan obligations, and the 1982 economic crisis loomed. During the 1980s, to combat the effects of the previous decade, Mexico initiated a series of neoliberal economic reforms to make itself attractive to foreign investment, including the privatization of the Mexican banking system, deregulation of markets, selling off government and firms, and the privatization of ejidos, communal lands managed by the government, experiencing similar success to the Asian Tigers.

NAFTA, established in January 1994, directly increased Mexican migration in two ways: the privatization of Mexico's ejidos under neoliberalist economic policies and

the elimination of agricultural subsidies. Historically, Mexican land ownership was concentrated in the hands of the wealthy. However, through a series of agrarian land reforms in the 1917 constitution, the Mexican working class and peasantry could participate in collective land ownership. Through the government-led collective land ownership system, or ejidos, individuals did not receive land rights. (Haber et al. 2008, 35) Ejidos prevented the elite class from purchasing copious amounts of land because all land was licensed under the government. (Haber et al. 2008, 31) Additionally, this system depended heavily on government funding because private entities and individuals could not obtain financing from private banks and therefore had to depend solely on the government to purchase tools and equipment. Ejidos were a crucial factor in increasing the social mobility of the peasantry in rural Mexico. However, President Carlos Salinas de Gortari repealed Article 27 of the Mexican Constitution in 1992, by authorizing the private ownership of ejido lands to attract foreign investment (Fernández-Kelly and Massey 2007, 104).

NAFTA was established without concern for the political and socioeconomic ramifications of "free trade" because neither party considered the indirect effects of these policies and believed that they would receive equal benefits from the agreement. Early on, President Salinas cited NAFTA as a top priority. Mexican interests in the treaty lay in Mexico's desire to experience economic success as the Asian Tigers had done (Fernández-Kelly and Massey 2007, 104). Patricia Fernandez Kelly and Douglas S. Massey define this sentiment as "tragically naïve" (2007). The success of the Asian Tigers was attributed to strict control of capital flow and investment, which were starkly different from the radical implementation of neoliberal policies Salinas favored.

Furthermore, the treaty lacked any consideration for migration as it assumed that encouraging NAFTA policies would limit Mexicans' desire to migrate for work. However, it did the opposite.

The major setback to NAFTA was the devaluation of the Mexican Peso in 1994 (Hadden 2002). Rural Mexican farmers and Mexico's food, seed, and feed markets were exposed to competition from Canada and the United States from which they could not compete (Fernández-Kelly and Massey 2007,105). During negotiation, 40% of all Mexicans working in agriculture cultivated corn and other products. However, when Mexico allowed cheaper imports of corn and beans from the U.S. and Canada, poor farmers were forced to compete with cheaper imports leading to mass unemployment (Women's Edge Coalition n.d.). An unintended consequence of NAFTA was the change in labor demands during the period. Farm workers were not considered a skilled labor force as the Maquiladora workers were. As a result, migrants were left with an ultimatum to start over in the skilled labor sector or work in the informal sector, a gray area of unauthorized, non-contractual work. The Women's Edge Coalition cites, "Almost 1.3 million agriculture jobs were lost in Mexico due to NAFTA" (Women's Edge Coalition n.d.). Those that kept their jobs' wages fell from 1,959 pesos per month to 228 pesos per month in 2003 (Women's Edge Coalition n.d.). Only two years after NAFTA's implementation, the share of the population living on less than \$3.20 per day increased from 20.83% to 36.54% (Statista 2016). The effects of NAFTA encouraged further emigration from Mexico. Following historical trends, Mexican men immigrated to the United States for better jobs, leaving their wives, children, and relatives in Mexico. From 1990 to 2000, more than 5 million Mexicans immigrated to the U.S. Despite migrating;

these men remained responsible for their families' livelihoods back home. Remittances became an essential supporting factor and tripled the number of Mexican oil exports during the same period (Sana 2008).

Following the establishment of NAFTA (1994), the United States implemented three strict immigration rulings to deter migration from Mexico and Central America; IRCA 1986, 1990, and 1992. The Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986 is vital because it created civil and criminal penalties for employers who knowingly hired undocumented immigrants or individuals unauthorized to work in the U.S., which reversed a 30-year precedent where employers were not legally responsible for hiring undocumented workers (Partida, n.d.; Lowell, Teachman, and Jing 1995). However, it also led to a string of repressive immigration policies that limited legal avenues to citizenship. Additionally, in its passage, it granted legalization through lawful permanent residence and naturalization to undocumented migrants who could demonstrate a record of entering the country before 1982 (Partida, n.d.). However, despite its anti-discrimination provisions, Hispanic and Latino migrants were considered more at risk of discriminatory practices because of the fines and legal provisions associated with employing undocumented migrants.

Moreover, at the time, undocumented Hispanic and Latino workers composed eight-point five percent of the workforce, which the General Accounting Office reported could lead to discrimination in workers seeking employment who appeared “Latino” (Dubina 2021; Lowell, Teachman, and Jing 1995). In addition, the 1990 Immigration Act added limitations to the immigration of family members, negatively affecting legal avenues for citizenship (Fernández-Kelly and Massey 2007, 107-108). Finally, the United

States increased border enforcement efforts and resources through its Operation Blockade and Gatekeeper campaigns, which deployed massive efforts at two of the busiest crossing sites between the US-Mexico border (Fernández-Kelly and Massey 2007, 107).

Despite the Immigration Reform Control Acts of 1986 and 1990 and increased border enforcement efforts to curb undocumented migration, undocumented immigration continued to increase. Compared to the previous periods of labor-based migration, like under the Bracero Program, migrants no longer traveled to the U.S. temporarily and instead returned to their home countries because of the risks and costs associated with entering the U.S. The number of undocumented immigrants in the United States rose from five million in 1986 to eleven million in 2000 (Pew Research Center, 2016). As a result, the entry routes and demographics of migrants associated with entering the United States changed drastically. Increased border enforcement led migrants to take less guarded and more dangerous routes to the United States. Due to associated risks, Coyotes or smugglers now requested higher payments associated with crossing the US-Mexico border. Fernandez-Kelly and Massey reported, "From 1980 to 1982, the costs of hiring a coyote remained relatively flat, averaging approximately \$400 per crossing. After 1993, the price of a smuggler's assistance rose steadily, leveling at about \$1,200 in 1999 (2007, 112)."

Much of the literature on Mexican immigration to the United States post-2000s encompasses the reasons mentioned above.

a. Central American Immigration to the United States

Compared with Mexican immigration to the United States, large-scale Central American migration began in 1960 following U.S. cold-war policy initiatives that brought the fight against communism to Central America. Migration from Central America has since been driven by three main factors; political instability, economic hardship, and natural disasters.

U.S. involvement in Latin American politics has historically involved US-backed coups to replace democratically elected governments with military juntas and authoritarian regimes to promote US business interests in the region. Specifically, within the Northern Triangle, countries including El Salvador, Honduras, and Guatemala, relations were highly turbulent, often leading to civil war and mass political persecution. During these wars, thousands were killed for suspected insurrection against the government and the support of the opposition. The Migration Policy Institute cites that "displacement and economic instability caused by regional civil wars, in which the U.S. government had involvement, led many Central Americans to migrate in the 1980s." Honduras was the foundation of U.S. covert operations against communism within the region. However, it was not plagued by civil war like its neighbors. The Salvadoran and Guatemalan Civil Wars alone accounted for more than 250,000 casualties and more than 550,000 internally displaced refugees in other countries (United Nations 1993; Briggs 2007). Due to a repressive government and war that destroyed infrastructure, migrants were pushed to the United States in search of better economic opportunities and security that their war-torn government could not provide. While the wars ended, economic instability remained, which increased migration. From 1980 to 1990, the population of

Central American immigrants in the United States increased from 354,000 to 1,340,000 (Migration Policy Institute 2011).

The Northern Triangle region is among the poorest in Latin America, with all three countries ranking consistently near the bottom in GDP per capita (Cheatham 2021). A 2022 World Bank Report found that the share of the population living on less than \$3.20 per day was the highest, with 29.01% in Honduras, 20.13% in Guatemala, and 5.69% in El Salvador. This accounts for roughly 6.5 million people living in poverty across the region. The Covid-19 pandemic exacerbated conditions in the region, leading to intense migration through mass caravans across Central America and Mexico (Krikorian 2021). While governments have attempted to address economic problems, many households depend on remittances sent from families living abroad to support themselves. The Council on Foreign Relations cites, "Though they dropped early in the pandemic, remittances to Latin America amounted to nearly \$135 billion in 2021, a 24 percent increase from the previous year." Of the 135 billion, remittances to the Northern Triangle accounted for nearly a quarter. Additionally, a 2021 MIT-MPI interview with 5,000 migrant households found that in all three countries, many households reported a worsening in their standards of living (Wang 2021). In Honduras, four times more residents reported worsening rather than improving economic conditions alone (Wang 2021).

Methods to curb undocumented immigration to the United States were extended to migrants from Central American countries in states of war. Through the Nicaraguan Adjustment and Central American Relief Act (NACARA), registered asylees (and their dependents) from Nicaragua, El Salvador, Cuba, Guatemala, and nationals of former

Soviet bloc countries were granted legal permanent resident (LPR) status (Tienda and Sánchez 2013,52). However, fewer than 70,000 asylees were legalized under the NACARA program through 2009 (Tienda and Sánchez 2013,52). Additionally, the Temporary Protected Status system was utilized for migrants fleeing natural disasters in the region, providing humanitarian protection for U.S. resident foreign nationals (Dale 2017). However, it did not grant legal avenues to citizenship for those who applied. The TPS program was time-limited and depended on acts of extension by congress (Dale 2017). Once the period ended, beneficiaries were and continue to be expected to return to their home countries.

A UC Davis study on the relationship between environmental disasters and Central American-US immigration concluded that "rapid-onset change is linked with environmentally induced displacement and migration, and that temporary displacement from natural catastrophes can lead to permanent migration (Andrade Afonso 2011, 13).” This is best illustrated by the 1998 Hurricane Mitch, dubbed "the deadliest Atlantic hurricane" in over 200 years, which devastated Honduras and Nicaragua (National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration 2001). Hurricane Mitch produced over 75 inches of precipitation during the storm, resulting in mudslides and floods that destroyed virtually all the infrastructure of Honduras and devastated parts of Nicaragua, Guatemala, Belize, and El Salvador (NOAA Satellite and Information Service 1998). In Honduras, 70 to 80 percent of transportation networks were destroyed, including most bridges and roads (U.N. Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean 2001). The impact was over 7,000 deaths in Honduras and 4,326 across El Salvador, Belize, Costa Rica, and Nicaragua (United States National Hurricane Center 2022). The economic toll across

Central America amounted to more than 6.76 billion dollars in damages (United States National Hurricane Center 2022).

While political instability, economic insecurity, and natural disasters have longstanding triggers for Central American migration, economic factors remain the primary motivations for Central American migration.

III. OVERVIEW OF POLITICAL CORRUPTION

Corruption is a phenomenon that has plagued all societies and has perplexed political scientists for years. However, perceptions of corruption and its existence differ depending on the type of political society. In pre-democratic societies, for example, where power was once sourced through kinship, corruption issues were less pressing because leaders were seen as legitimated by their familial relations (Balachandrudu 2006, 809). As democratic societies developed, institutions developed to provide checks on previous unbridled power given to officials; since then, analysts and political leaders have desired corruption-free societies (Balachandrudu 2006, 810).

Transparency International, one of the leading sources in measuring corruption, defines the phenomenon as "the abuse of entrusted power for private gain (Transparency International 2023)." While scholars have given many definitions of corruption, all definitions include the component of public officials using their power for private gain. This problem is highlighted in developing countries lacking a robust political order and stable, legitimate institutions. Therefore, entrusted officials can easily take advantage of the system because it lacks structural support in the form of checks and balances.

Due to the nature of corruption as a clandestine activity, achieving a universal definition and measure of it is nearly impossible (The PRS Group 2011). As a result, researchers rely mainly on two indirect methods to measure corruption: 1. perception-based measures of corruption, which surveys households, businesses, and individuals on their respective opinions. 2. Scholar's analysis of corrupt acts present within society through internal business records, public information, and the news (Rodriguez-Sanchez 2018, 4-5). The most common corruption indices include the Corruption Perception

Index (CPI), the Bribe Payers Index (BPI), the International Country Risk Guide (ICRG), the World Bank's Worldwide Governance Indicators (WGI), and LAPOP Barometer (Rodriguez-Sanchez 2018, 5; Haywood 2014, 1).

Within the field, scholars define two fields of corruption: grand corruption, which is defined as "the abuse of high-level power that benefits the few at the expense of the many and causes serious widespread harm to individuals and society that often goes unpunished Transparency International (2016)." While petty corruption is defined as "petty, bureaucratic, or administrative corruption (that) takes place at the implementation end of politics, where the public meets public officials (UNESCO's International Institute for Educational Planning, n.d.)." Through grand corruption, high-level individuals siphon money from private accounts at the general public's expense. Additionally, high-level officials may utilize government institutions to legalize their activities and weaken the powers of other branches. On the other hand, petty corruption presents itself in low-level bureaucratic activities where citizens are trying to access essential goods or services in hospitals, schools, police departments, and other agencies (Transparency International, n.d.). The prevalence of both types of corruption severely affects the development of democratic institutions by undermining sound financial practices and clean business, widening inequality through exclusion, and violating human rights for both impoverished and wealthy people (Transparency International 2016).

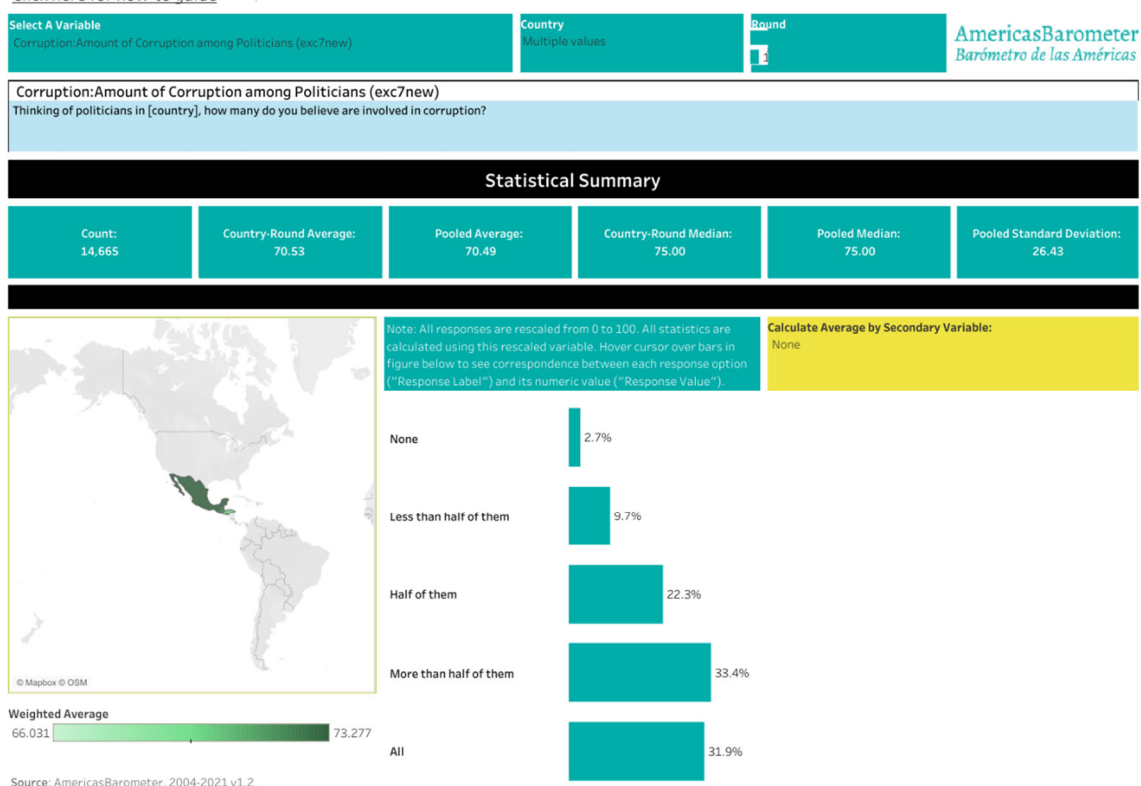
IV. MEASURING CORRUPTION IN CENTRAL AMERICA AND MEXICO

Vanderbilt University's Latin American Public Opinion Poll (LAPOP)

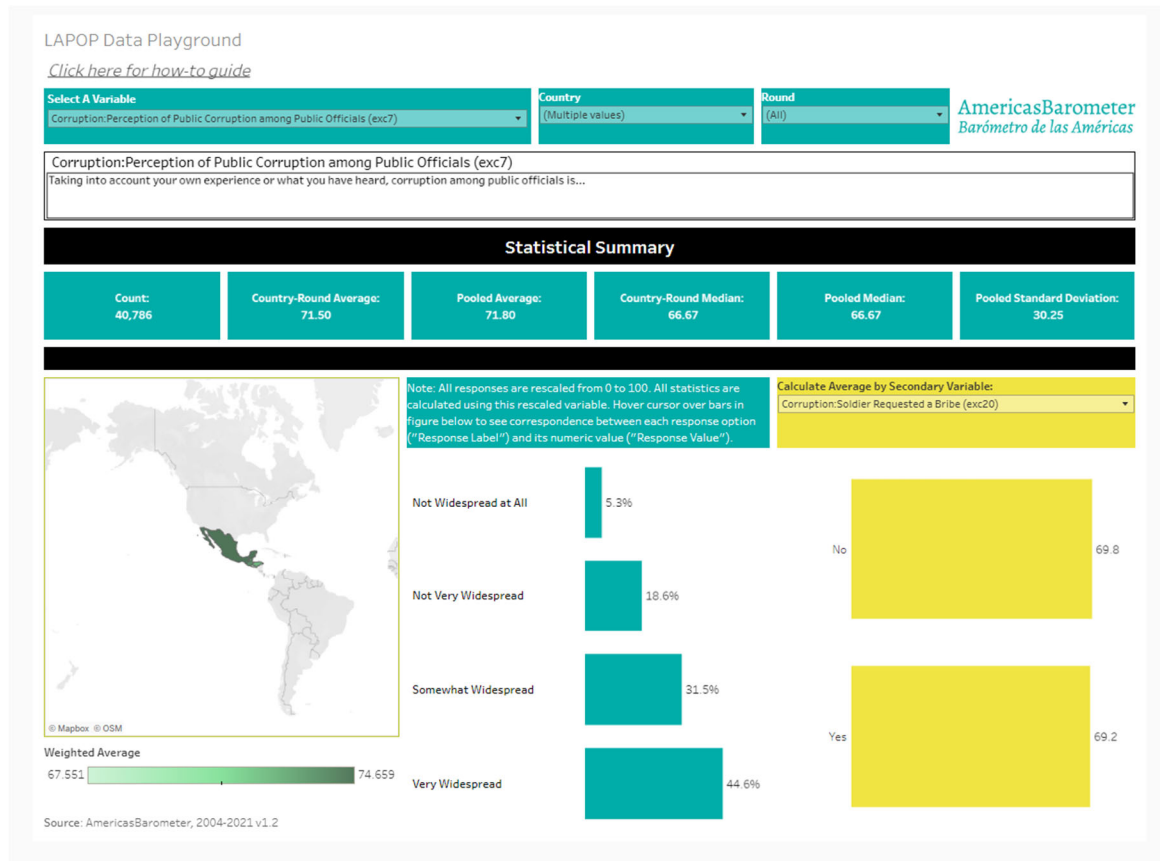
AmericasBarometer is a study of 34 countries in the Western Hemisphere that measures attitudes, evaluations, experiences, and behavior in the Americas using national probability samples of voting-age adults on the following topics: economy, the rule of law, state capacity, trust in institutions, individual values, corruption, and security (AmericasBarometer, 2004-2021 v1.2). The latest data is sourced from the 2004-2021 AmericasBarometer metrics and reveals the following perceptions of corruption from individuals in Mexico, Guatemala, Honduras, and El Salvador:

LAPOP Data Playground

[Click here for how-to guide](#)



When respondents were asked about their beliefs on the amount of corruption among politicians, more than 65% cited that they were all or at least more than half of them were corrupt. While significantly lower than perceptions in Mexico and the Northern Triangle, 42% of US respondents cited more than half of politicians as corrupt.



76.1 percent of respondents ranked the level of corruption present among public officials as somewhat and very widespread, further emphasizing that, on average, in the last 12 months, 66.9% of respondents voted yes, that they were asked for a bribe from a government employee, 55.1% of respondents were asked to pay a bribe to the courts, 46.9% were asked to pay bribes to process documents in their municipalities, and finally, 40.8% were asked to pay a bribe at their place of work (AmericasBarometer, 2004-2021 v1.2). Respondents' perceptions of corruption demonstrate that they frequently encounter

petty or low-level corruption compared to direct encounters with high-level or grand corruption (AmericasBarometer, 2004-2021 v1.2). Compared to the United States, only 28.6% of respondents perceived corruption among public officials as widespread.

Next, respondents were asked to evaluate the level of trust in the branches and the quality of government. On a scale from one to seven, 22.1% of respondents ranked their level of trust in the executive as zero, while 43.7% of respondents ranked their level of trust between a level three and five (AmericasBarometer, 2004-2021 v1.2). These results, in conjunction with perceptions of politicians, may imply that high perceptions of corrupt officials reflect negatively on the present executives in the region. However, almost 3/4th of respondents ranked their level of trust in local government considerably higher than in the executive, despite the prevalence of bribes requested from public officials for social services (AmericasBarometer, 2004-2021 v1.2). When asked about their trust in the National Police, approximately 64.5% of respondents ranked it as less than a level 4, indicating low to moderate trust in its institution (AmericasBarometer, 2004-2021 v1.2). Furthermore, almost 50% of respondents cited little to no confidence in elections in their home countries.

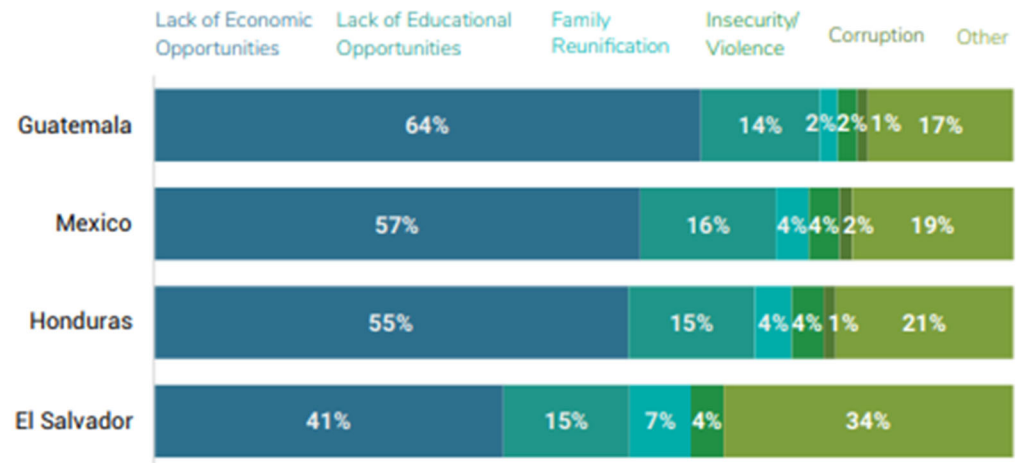
On the other hand, when asked about their level of trust in the judicial and legislative branches of government, many US respondents ranked them as a four or higher, accounting for over 75% of participants. However, when questioned about their trust in the executive, 62% ranked their level of trust on a scale of 7 within the level 1 (Not at all) to level 4 range (somewhat).

LAPOP's insights demonstrate that citizens in Mexico, El Salvador, Honduras, and Guatemala, lack trust and view corruption among various branches of government in

their countries. And despite their constant vocalization of this in LAPOPs 2004-2021 metrics, corruption as a driver for immigration has yet to be studied and identified as impactful on citizens' decisions to migrate. In LAPOPs 2021 Pulse of Democracy report in the Americas, their research reaffirms the commonly held consensus by migration researchers that the lack of economic opportunities is a vital driver of intentions to emigrate with more than 40% of respondents from Mexico and the Northern Triangle region citing economic opportunity as a key driver. The data also demonstrates that more than 20% of respondents from Central America and 19% of respondents from Mexico listed corruption as a driving factor. (LAPOP 2021, 26). And yet, research on corruption in Mexico and Central America has also not focused on this dimension. Researchers, instead, highlight the political aspects of corruption by illustrating how political corruption exacerbates social, political, and economic inequality, impedes the ability of states to adequately provide public health and education resources, erodes public trust by undermining citizen's faith in government, and enables organized crime groups to easily infiltrate and control areas by providing economic opportunity and security, however, very little research has focused on connecting the two topics (The White House 2021).

The lack of economic opportunities is a key driver of intentions to emigrate in 2021

% most important reason for emigrating



Source: AmericasBarometer, 2021

LAPOP

V. THEORY AND METHODS

a. Theory

There is little research focusing on the relationship linking corruption and migration. Although cross-sectional research on corruption and migration needs to be better explored, The Migration Policy Institute (MPI) has added to the limited knowledge of the fields (Carling, Paasche, and Siegal 2015). MPI finds that the connection between the two phenomena shape each other directly, with migration affecting the practice and perception of corruption, while corruption induces, facilitates, or obstructs migration (Carling, Paasche, and Siegal 2015). The Migration Policy Institute also touches on Lee's concept of push-pull migration by citing that countries where corruption is perceived as widespread contain the highest emigration rates (Carling, Paasche, and Siegal 2015). It also demonstrates that countries with little corruption, like the United States and most western European countries, have the highest immigration rates. These countries also rank well on Transparency International's Corruption Perception Index (CPI), with Denmark, Finland, and Sweden ranking first among one-hundred and ninety-five countries with the lowest

levels of perceived corruption (Transparency International 2022, 4-5).

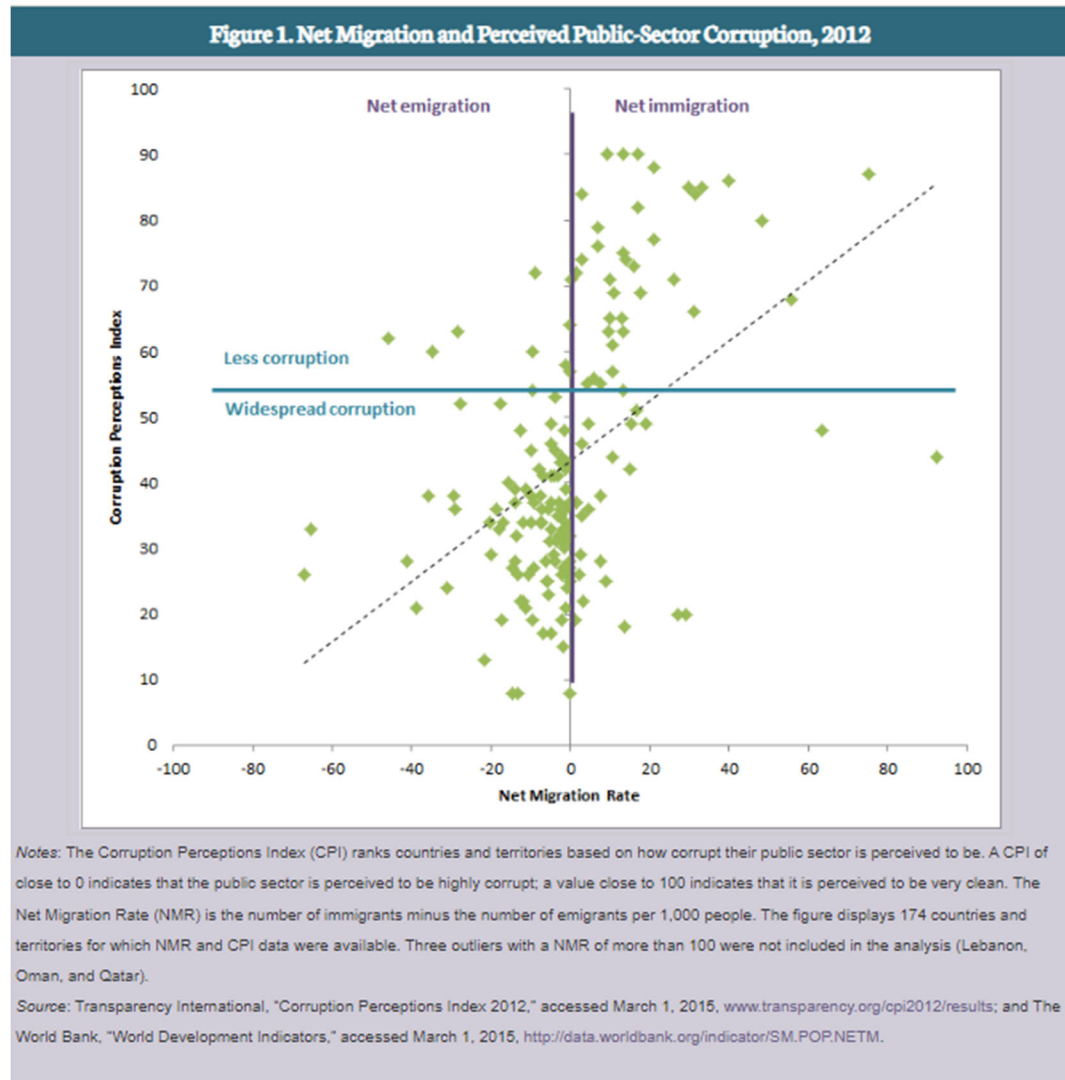


Figure 1 demonstrates that countries with minor corruption, mainly those in Europe and the global north broadly, have the highest immigration rates. While countries with high levels of corruption, some countries within the global south contain the highest net emigration rates from their home country to others. This finding is vital in explaining how corruption can encourage emigration and inhibit return, leading to permanent settlement.

Moreover, they establish ten fundamental migration-corruption mechanisms beginning with the most established connections (Carling, Paasche, and Siegal 2015). The four strongest connections related to my research are as follows: 1. Corruption facilitates illegal migration through bribery. Officials can take advantage of migrants, aid in providing false documents, and protect employers of undocumented migrants. These systems can equally harm or aid migrants' ability to immigrate, documented or undocumented, into their destination countries.; 2. Corruption impedes the development benefits of migration despite its ability to alleviate poverty. Migrants' desire to emigrate from their country of origin relates to the difficulty of attaining or building services. For example, suppose essential public services require bribes, such as using a road or receiving a business permit. In that case, migrant-driven investment is reduced because these activities siphon funds that could be invested into the economy or future endeavors. This investment is also reduced as it relates to remittances because remittance recipients are targeted for extortion, making immigrants less inclined to send money home; 3. Corruption enables humanitarian protection because migrants experiencing corruption or political persecution can seek protection in another country based on well-founded fears. 4. Corruption stimulates migration desires due to the lack of opportunity and trust in government institutions. Widespread corruption can further weaken institutions and undermine the rule of law, thereby encouraging poverty and insecurity. 5. Relating to the previous point, corruption discourages return migration because they desire to remain in non-corrupt and more economically stable societies with greater social services. Corruption in countries of origin plays a vital role in even returning to visit. For example, requests for bribes by border officials, owning property, or running a business can be an

uphill battle that migrants are particularly interested in revisiting (Carling, Paasche, and Siegal 2015). While all these cited linkages are possible, it is vital to analyze the practical implications of these linkages as applied to migration patterns from Mexico, which in 2014 ranked 2nd as one of the highest countries of emigration, and other parts of Central America that send more than 16 million global migrants combined and who rank high on Transparency International's Corruption Perception Index (Migration Policy Institute 2014).

Based on the information presented above, the following hypotheses have been developed.

- a. **Hypothesis 1:** Men will encounter more frequent experiences of corruption related to extortion and bribe requests than their female counterparts.
- b. **Hypothesis 2:** Compared to migrants with familial connections, migrants who traveled alone, without family networks, will have pursued more dangerous and hostile migration routes than their counterparts.
- c. **Hypothesis 3:** Despite the risks of migrating through informal networks and pathways (i.e., through coyotes, by train, or caravan, etc.), migrants will have a relatively optimistic outlook on their experiences regarding the end goal of successful immigration to the United States.
- d. **Hypothesis 4:** All migrants will have either a direct experience with corruption (i.e., through extortion and bribery, etc.) or indirect experiences as a result of the effects of corruption (i.e., limited economic opportunity, fleeing organized crime organizations, overall lack of security and the rule of law, widespread inequality, lack of jobs in the formal sector/reliance on the informal sector, etc.) that leads them to pursue emigrating.

b. Methods

Participants: Ten immigrants (6 from Honduras and four from Mexico, six male and four female) between 18 and 55 participated in this study. All participants migrated to the United States within the last 30 years. Each participant was interviewed individually at their location of choice in conjunction with Middle Tennessee State University's Covid-19 Guidelines. Participants were selected using the snowball sampling technique, where participants assisted researchers in providing participants to the study. All participation was voluntary and followed Institutional Review Board protocol. Participants were not compensated for their participation in this study.

Apparatus: Participants were interviewed and asked thirteen questions; five were follow-up questions concerning the general questions in the first section related to their country of origin, legal status upon arrival in the US, and journey to the US.

Procedure: Participants were interviewed for up to an hour using the questions mentioned above and informed that an audio recording would be taken, to which they all agreed. Participants could conduct interviews in either Spanish or English, with a natural preference for Spanish. Participants' perceptions of their home countries, the United States immigration system and the plights of other family members were also discussed.

VI. FINDINGS

Participants cited better opportunities, salary, and family reunification as drivers for emigration from their home countries. However, when asked to expand on these factors, most cited political instability and low salaries motivating them the most. Interviewee one cited:

"My children's father lived here, while the children stayed with me in my home country (Honduras). Many times, when a family is left alone and one of the parents has the children, they divide themselves and take different routes. So, to make my family stay together, and help support my husband, I decided to migrate to the United States."

Interviewee one also went on to cite the lack of opportunity and the rule of law present in Honduras:

"One of my family members began selling eggs and other animal products to make a living and found themselves being targeted. Gangs came asking for money to run her business even though she sold products from her home or even people in the community would try and take advantage of her. No one wants to live in a place where you don't have the freedom to make something of yourself."

Despite corruption not being listed as a primary motivating factor, such instances help shape emigration desires.

Male participants, ages 18-25, were more likely to experience being asked for bribes by border officials during their trip to cross the United States-Mexico border. In addition, they cited utilizing coyotes or smugglers, who drug cartels mainly employ to manage undocumented crossing into the United States. Few female participants noted using coyotes but acknowledged the dangers associated with these methods.

When asked about his opinion, Interviewee Five responded with the following:

"Everyone knows the dangers of using coyotes, but no one cares. Unfortunately, there is no certainty that you will arrive in the United States, but there is hope."

There is optimism because we know what is waiting for us back home. There aren't enough jobs and if there are, we make very little pay. So, the journey is rewarding even though it is very risky. Most dangers come from safety. The routes taken are dangerous and the smugglers will not stop or turn back. Their only goal is to get you across the border and nothing else, but it's what we have to do to come here."

All participants acknowledged these dangers and cited knowing someone who used coyotes to arrive in the US. However, they reaffirmed interviewee five's perspective in that despite its challenges, the benefits of coming to the US outweigh the risks associated with using smugglers.

All participants cited that they did not experience discrimination by public servants in their home country based on gender or sexual orientation. Most participants did not participate in or begin the formal immigration process in their countries of origin. However, interviewees 7 and 8 did. The couple, both from Mexico, came from a more well-off family that funded their immigration process to the United States, and on arrival, they were already documented. This couple also elected a safer route to the United States via plane and had familial connections, making their process and acclimation to the United States easier. Additionally, in their responses to the interviewing questions, they cited little trouble with officials and little to no experience with corruption.

Participants who arrived during the late 1990s had varying experiences than those who came in the past ten to fifteen years or had a network of family already in the United States. For example, Interviewee 10 from Honduras traveled by train to Mexico at fourteen years old before arriving in the United States. This participant cited difficulties assimilating into US culture due to Tennessee's lack of a Hispanic population. Because he arrived undocumented, he quickly became homeless and lived under bridges begging for food and job opportunities. He recalled accepting odd jobs for less than minimum wage

at the time to gain professional experience, and now thirty years later, he owns a flooring business. He also cited strong conservative opinions toward Latinos who do not permanently settle in the United States:

"It's unfair. You have people like me who have lived in the US for 20 years who built themselves from the ground up and then others who visit the United States temporarily to work during the summers and leave back home. Or those who migrate and don't assimilate into US culture, who don't learn English or make an attempt to better themselves. This isn't our country."

The children and relatives of participants who migrated in the last ten years elected faster and safer modes of transportation to the United States. Due to the networks established by relatives, their transportation methods were more modern, safer, and resourceful. However, most participants still arrived undocumented.

Finally, about work conditions in the United States, all participants cited that they had not experienced extortion or corruption related to work and other visas. Furthermore, they reaffirmed that all their experiences in the US were positive, despite encountering work-related racism. Most male participants cited that at their blue-collar workplaces they encountered microaggressions related to their ethnic background. For example, Interviewee 2 mentioned that,

"At work, someone may not know your name or may not care too, and they'll call to you as amigo, come here amigo, and they don't understand how that makes us feel, but it's normal, and we don't correct it. People also mistakenly call me Mexican or ask for my opinions on Mexico when I'm from Honduras. They don't really care to learn."

Other participants used similar examples, but despite how these microaggressions made them feel, participants did not cite confronting coworkers about the issue.

Of the five proposed hypotheses, the prediction concerning all participants experiencing some levels of corruption was an overestimate. Interviewees 7 and 8 were

an outlier in comparison to the rest of participants. Their relative wealth in comparison to everyone else may have sheltered them from experiences shared by migrants with a lack of supportive networks.

VII. CONCLUSION

Given the historical relationship between the United States and Latin America, this study sought to investigate the impacts of political corruption on Mexican and Central American immigration. This study added to the gap between corruption and immigration as interrelated fields to analyze the implications of the prevalence of corruption on migrants. Due to the nature of this qualitative study, participants' subjective perceptions were essential in understanding the motivations and challenges of migrants in their journey to the United States. Although there are several studies on the history of Mexican and Central American immigration and political corruption, very few have attempted to synthesize a connection between the two. This study cited United States foreign policy as a significant determining factor for modern-day trends of corruption and migration in the region. These findings reaffirmed previous scholarly work in immigration research by demonstrating that better opportunities, salary, and family reunification are the primary drivers for Mexican and Central American immigration. However, corruption, whether directly or indirectly experienced, shapes the decisions that migrants make to come to the United States. Another contribution made to the existing literature by this study was the challenges faced by migrants in their journey to the United States and methods for crossing the border. This study also discovered that males were more likely to experience greater instances of corruption because they were more likely to be asked for bribes. There are also implications based on the economic status of participants in their countries of origin; if relatives already lived in the United States, they were more likely to sponsor them and provide resources that were not readily available to participants who immigrated without familiar connections.

By using snowball sampling and qualitative interviewing methods, this study provided brief insights into the immigration process and conditions experienced by Mexican and Central American migrants by incorporating human experience as the center of the study. For US perceptions of Latin American migrants to change, we must first acknowledge our history and sphere of influence as a historical pull factor for migration and do away with perceptions that highlight migrants as predators attempting to do away with the US way of life. Finally, the US immigration system immigration policies need to be revised to allow a more straightforward naturalization process for the more than 10 million undocumented immigrants in the United States (Kamarck and Stenglein 2019)

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APPENDIX A. INTERVIEW QUESTIONS



General questions:

1. When did you arrive in the United States?
2. How old were you when you arrived?
3. What motivated you to migrate to the United States?
4. What role did your family play in encouraging you to emigrate? Did you already have family members in the United States, or were you the first to come?
5. Did you arrive with or without papers?
6. Overall, how difficult was your migration experience? What challenges did you face during the migration?
7. Was corruption a factor in your decision to migrate? If so, how?
8. During the day, did you encounter corruption personally or did you witness it during the process?

Follow-up questions:

1. Have you suffered or witnessed violence from organized crime? Specifically, how has it affected you and others to migrate to the United States?
2. Have you been discriminated against by anyone in the government (military, police, civil servants) because of your gender or sexual orientation?
3. Were public officials, such as the police, beneficial or detrimental to your formal immigration process (forms, interviews, etc.) and journey (or trip)?
4. Have you or someone you know used coyotes during your trip to the United States? What were the risks and benefits associated with this process?
5. In the United States, have you experienced work-related extortion or corruption and other related visas? Like employers who withhold documents, employees who overwork, don't get paid for work, or don't allow lunch breaks?

APPENDIX B: IRB APPROVAL DOCUMENTS

IRB

INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD

Office of Research Compliance,
010A Sam Ingram Building,
2269 Middle Tennessee Blvd
Murfreesboro, TN 37129

IRBF007b – PARTICIPANT RECRUITMENT EMAIL

All the fields are mandatory. The IRB will not make changes to the font size or style. No images will be allowed and there will be no exceptions to all the requirements. The IRB may impose additional restrictions and requirements during the review. The approved email script will be sent in a locked format but the PI will be able copy and paste the text.

INSTRUCTIONS

Use the following script for email recruitment

Subject line(s) for email recruitment:

RE: Participants being sought for an immigration research study.

Body of the script/email:

Dear ,

My name is Dimend Little and I am a student in the Political Science department at Middle Tennessee State University. I am conducting a research study on political corruption as a trigger for immigration.

Study Description & Purpose – The purpose of this study is to investigate the effects of political corruption on Mexican and Central American emigration. This study aims to examine features of the Mexican political system as push factors towards emigrating. General push factors may include the lack of economic opportunity, proximity to the United States, lax emigration structures, and political and public violence. Research will be conducted through in-depth recorded interviews to analyze factors contributing to participants migration from their home countries to the

United States.

IRBF007d: Recruitment Email

Version 5.0

Revision Date 09/22/2020

IRB Details:

- *Protocol Title:* The Great Flight: Political Corruption as a Trigger for Mexican Immigration
- *Primary Investigator:* Dimend Little
- *PI Department & College:* Political Science, *College* of Liberal Arts, *Middle Tennessee State University*
- *Faculty Advisor (if PI is a student):* Dr. Stephen Morris
- **Protocol ID:** 22-2142 7ei **Approval:** 05/02/2022 **Expiration:** 04/30/2023

Target Participant Pool – Adults ages 18 and older who have immigrated from Mexico and Central America to the United States.

Risks & Discomforts – The risks of participating in this study are no more than what is experienced in daily life.

Benefits – While there are no benefits to participants, participation in the research study will add to the limited field on corruption and immigration

Additional Information – It is anticipated that it will take approximately one hour to conduct interviews. Interviewees will be informed if further interviews are required. Further interviews remain at the discretion of interviewees. Participants who do not fall into the aforementioned categories are ineligible for participation.

Compensation – There will be no compensation for participating.

Contact Information – Please contact Dimend Little with any questions, comments or concerns email or telephone at dkl2z@mtmail.mtsu.edu or 615-924-5047. .

Please review the attached COVID-19 prescreening questions before you decide to enroll in this study.

Thank you for your time.

Yours Sincerely,

Human Participant Research Proposal
IRBF001: EXPEDITED REVIEW REQUEST FORM
Institutional Review Board
Middle Tennessee State University

“Expedited” versus “Full Review” Definition:

Please note “expedited” does not mean this proposal would be reviewed by a “fast track” mechanism; it merely means the proposed research study does not require a full committee review. Other than the actual review & approval, the procedures and documents requirement are mostly similar.

- *Expedited Review:* <https://mtsu.edu/irb/ExpeditedProcedures.php>
- *Full Committee Review:* <https://mtsu.edu/irb/FullReviewProcedures.php>

What does this form contain?

This form separated into the following sections with added subsections to make the review process swifter. **The AY-2021 form also contains space for how the PI plans to handle potential COVID-19 exposure.**

- | | |
|--|--|
| 1. Project Information | 8. Informed Consent |
| 2. VACANT | 9. CITI Training and Researcher Expertise |
| 3. VACANT | 10. Mandatory Documents & Attachments |
| 4. Expedited Approval Category | 11. Investigators' Declaration and Assurance |
| 5. Research Methods & Instruments | 12. <i>IRB Action (Office Use)</i> |
| 6. Participant Selection & Recruitment | 13. <i>Additional Procedures APPENDICES</i> |
| 7. Confidentiality | 14. VACANT |

Mandatory requirements

- Participant recruitment - <https://mtsu.edu/irb/FAQ/Recruitment.php>
- Completed informed consent form(s): <https://mtsu.edu/irb/forms.php>
- All of the investigators must complete all required research-specific CITI training modules - <https://mtsu.edu/irb/requirements.php>
- Study instruments
- **Plans to minimize COVID-19 exposure if the participants will have direct physical interactions**
- Other documents may be required

Instructions for document submission.

- Use Microsoft Office to complete this form; DO NOT use other apps or utilities
- Send all of documents as **separate** files but in a single email to irb_submissions@mtsu.edu
- Submit all IRB forms in their original MS Word format – DO NOT CONVERT TO PDF
- Student researcher must have the IRB documents submitted by their research advisor
- Please use fresh application templates when starting a new study; do not use older version.
- **Do not begin your Research until you have received a formal approval letter.**

Review & Timeline

- The documents will be prescreened for completeness – incomplete applications will be returned
- A reviewer will be assigned after the prescreen; the review is expected to take 2-3 weeks
- This form will be sent back to the investigators with reviewers' comments and other instructions
- The review process is iterative and it depends on how swiftly the reviewers' concerns are addressed.
- Once a final approval has been issued, a “locked” version of this form may be sent to the investigators to be used as a guideline for their study.

1. PROJECT INFORMATION**1.1 Select the type or Review Mechanism:**☒ Expedited Review☐ Full Committee Review**1.2 Project Title**

The Great Flight: Political Corruption as a Trigger for Mexican Emigration

Primary Investigator (PI) Refer to <https://www.mtsu.edu/irb/FAQ/ResponsibilitiesOfPI.php> for PI responsibilities.☒ Faculty ☐ Staff ☐ Graduate ☐ Undergraduate ☐ Other:

Name	Dimend Little		
Email	dkl2z@mtmail.mtsu.edu	Telephone	615-924-5047
Alternate* Email	dimendlittle19@gmail.com *if PI is a student		
Department/Unit	Political Science	College	Liberal Arts
Office	Room #209	Building	Peck Hall Box #29
Contact Address	MANDATORY if Non-MTSU		
CITI Program	10570701		

1.3 Faculty Advisor (FA) if the PI is a student:☐ NONEName Stephen Morris ☒ Faculty ☐ Staff ☐ Other

Email stephen.morris@mtsu.edu Telephone 615-494-7687

Department/Unit Political Science College Liberal Arts

Office Location Room #232 Building Peck Hall Box #29

CITI Program ID 25036131

- **Must be completed by an MTSU faculty member or a full time employee of MTSU if the PI is a student.** Refer <https://www.mtsu.edu/irb/FAQ/Faculty.php>
- The FA must submit the application packet by email to irb_submissions@mtsu.edu indicating that s/he has knowledge of this proposal.

1.5 Co-Investigators (List all researchers other than the PI/FA)☒ NONE**1.6 Research Category (select ALL that apply):**

- ☐ Faculty research ☐ FRCAC ☐ Not for Publication ☐ Class Project
☒ Thesis Dissertation ☐ URECA ☐ Publication/Presentation ☐ Staff research
☐ Other

1.8 Miscellaneous Questions:

Project Questions	Response	Remark(s)
Expected start date	05/01/2022	
Anticipated completion date The protocol will be closed on this date	08/31/2022	
Source of funding (Funding agency, number/ID, and expiration date)	N/A	

- Expedited and Full protocols are valid for one year; Annual Progress Report is mandatory
 - For studies that require more than one year, the investigator must submit a written request for continuing review and a Progress Report (form available at www.mtsu.edu/irb and click on FORMS)
 - Each protocol can be continued twice; a new application must be submitted after 3 years
-

Review Tracking

		IRB Comments
Protocol ID	22-2142 7e	ID changed from 22-2142 7xx
Date Received	04/11/2022	
Prescreen Date	04/15/2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Address minor issues highlighted in cyan • Return this form with verbal recruitment script
Revision Date (if applicable)	04/18/2022	
Admin	04/21/2022	
Review Date	04/29/2022	
Revision Date (if applicable)		Administrative corrections to in person informed consent and recruitment email
Approval Date	05/02/2022	
Expiration Date	04/30/2023	

4 APPROVAL CATEGORY for EXPEDITED REVIEW

Select the category under which this proposal qualifies for an expedited review. Refer to <https://mtsu.edu/irb/FAQ/ExpeditedCategories.php> for more details on each of these categories and make your selection after you have familiarized with the categories.

	Category Description	Select	Subcategory
1	Clinical studies of drugs and/or medical devices	<input type="checkbox"/>	
2	Collection of blood samples	<input type="checkbox"/>	
3	Collection of biological specimens for research purpose	<input type="checkbox"/>	
4	Data collection through noninvasive procedures like exercise	<input type="checkbox"/>	
5	Research involving materials (data, documents, records, or specimen) that were collected solely for non-research purpose	<input type="checkbox"/>	N/A
6	Analysis of previously recorded voice, video, images and etc., which were collected for research purposes	<input type="checkbox"/>	N/A
7	Research of individual or group characteristics or behavior	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	N/A
8	Continuing review of certain previously approved studies	<input type="checkbox"/>	
9	Continuing review of studies not conducted under investigational new drug or investigational device.	<input type="checkbox"/>	

If multiple modes of data collection is being proposed, then select all the categories that apply. For instance, you propose to collect blood samples and plan to survey the participant behavior, then select categories 2 and 7.

Check the box(es) corresponding to the category under which your study qualifies for an expedited review. Enter the sub-category (<https://mtsu.edu/irb/FAQ/ExpeditedCategories.php>).

5 RESEARCH METHODS & INSTRUMENTS

5.1 HYPOTHESIS:

Provide the research questions being addressed in this study. Also describe if the study design. (e.g., qualitative, correlation, factorial, etc)

To what extent is political corruption a trigger for emigration?

5.2 BACKGROUND:

Describe relevant research that has been done previously. Include citations as well as a brief description of relevant methods and important findings. You may limit this section to a sample of the most relevant research.

One factor not discussed in literature on migration is corruption. Mexico has long suffered high levels of corruption, with its CPI rating ranking at 31 on a scale from 0, highly corrupt, to 100, very clean, since 2019 (Transparency International 2020). Additionally, bribery and solicitation have historically been incorporated into Mexico's political culture. Allen Hicken notes clientelism as a system "characterized by the combination of particularistic targeting and contingency based on exchange." (Hicken 2011) This process results in a political system where politicians or government officials receive bribes or bribe others for political and economic gains. LAPOP's 2021 AmericasBarometer demonstrated that across Latin America, bribe solicitation was the highest in Mexico, and men, younger, better educated, and wealthier individuals were most likely to be victimized by police (Lupu, Rodriguez, and Zechmeister (Eds.) 2021, 35, 36). Corruption has also penetrated public servants, with a 12-point increase in bribery since 2006 and has historically supplemented lower wages across the country (Lupu, Rodriguez, and Zechmeister (Eds.) 2021, 68). If citizens do not comply in providing bribes, they face challenges in receiving important documents, owning property, and immigrating. This has led to a lack of rule of law in Mexico and human abuses by the Mexican government against citizens.

5.3 PROTOCOL SUMMARY:

Provide a short summary of this proposed study by providing the steps to be followed in chronological order. Start from participant recruitment, informed consent, data collection, debriefing, safety monitoring, and etc. Detailed descriptions can be presented in other segments of this application.

Participant recruitment will begin during the summer of 2022 through snowball sampling and an IRB approved email. Researchers will contact immigrant and refugee rights centers from the greater Nashville and Murfreesboro areas to recruit potential participants.

Once participants have expressed interest and read the terms and conditions expressed in the email template, researchers will schedule interviews on behalf of participants. These interviews will be scheduled two-weeks in advance to minimize the spread of Covid-19. Participants and researchers will complete a Covid-19 symptom survey by email before their scheduled interview. Interviews will be conducted at the South East Branch library in Antioch, TN or at the discretion of interviewees. Meeting rooms are free and available at request for the public, so no outside permission is required a part from scheduling.

Informed consent forms will be administered before interviewing participants. Researchers will reemphasize the voluntary nature of the study which allows participants to withdraw from it at any time.

This project's anticipated date of implementation is from May 16th, 2022 to August 31st, 2022. There will be approximately 100 participants. Data will be collected through voice recording and written notes in respective interviews.

The time commitment required will include approximately one hour. Participants may withdraw from the study at any time by informing the researchers and completing an exit form authorizing or deauthorizing the usage of their interview in the projects data.

NOTE: The goal of this section is to provide a full picture of the events and methods to the reviewers. The finer details may be presented in the sections provided below.

5.4 DATA DESCRIPTION:

5.4.1 Primary mode of data collection

Select ALL applicable options and complete appropriate Appendix sections:

5.4.1.1 Select type of interaction

☐ NONE

☐ NO new data collection is done in this study

☐ Virtual or online interaction with NO direct physical contact with the participant

Direct physical interaction with the participant: Complete Appendix COVID-19

☐ No social distancing ☐ No Masks worn ☐ CDC guidelines not followed

☐ Participant-to-participant direct contacts - Complete Appendix COVID-19

5.4.1.2 Non-physical interventions/interactions

☐ NONE

☒ Social & Behavioral

Complete Section 5.4.2

☐ Educational

Complete Section 5.4.2

☐ Existing Data (Analysis including investigation of audio/video)

Complete 5.4.2 & Appendix L

☐ Biospecimen – Analysis of previously collected biological samples

Complete Appendix F)

Please provide a simple definition of what you mean by “data”:

Include the parameters to be obtained along with a description of the survey/interview; Please do NOT enter the mode of data collection and do NOT repeat the entire survey or interview.

Written data will be recorded from interviews. Data consists of any recorded information taken by the researcher from participants during the interviewing process. Written data would include key words/descriptors that applicants use to describe their immigration process. I will look for specific descriptors to describe reasons for emigrating like economic problems, family relocation, etc to synthesize research data. Additionally, recorded data will enable the researcher to re-listen to interviewees responses and transcribe them for filing purposes.

Prescreen: please provide a description of what one would find in the written data and the interview responses.

5.4.1.3 Other Intervention/interactions

☒ NONE

5.4.2 Data Acquisition: Complete this section for all types of Social/Behavioral and Education studies:

5.4.2.1 Survey⁸ Submit Survey either as PDF or as MS Word document

Email: Explain: A COVID-19 symptom survey will be distributed to participants atleast two days before their scheduled interviews.

☒ 5.4.2.2 Interview⁸ Submit interview script/topics as a PDF or as a MS Word document

Face-to-face in person Interview

☐ 5.4.2.3 Observation⁹ ☐ In person ☐ Zoom

Explain and describe the instruments

☐ 5.4.2.4 Focus Group(s)⁹ ☐ In person ☐ Zoom

Explain and describe the instruments:

☐ **5.4.2.5 Other** ☐ In person ☐ Zoom ☐ Qualtric ☐ Other
Explain and describe the instruments

Notes:

⁸ Attach a list of survey/interview questions with the application

⁹ Describe the instruments to be used in the observational study or to be used during focus groups

¹⁰ All of the investigators MUST complete "Internet Based Research" module under CITI SBR course

5.5 DATA ANALYSIS: What is your plan for analyzing the data? **Include how any personal data, voice recordings, images and other types of identifiable artifacts collected from the participants will be used in the analysis.**

Data will be analyzed as it is received. By analyzing as soon as possible, researchers will be able to determine biases within the sample population towards certain responses or questions. This will allow improvement in the wording and execution of potential questions.

5.6 How will this design allow you to address the research question?

This design will allow me to address the research question by synthesizing participants responses to both immigration and corruption holistically.

5.7 RESERVED – No response is needed

5.8 DEBRIEFING: Describe how the participants will be debriefed; attach copies of debriefing statements

Participants will be debriefed by researchers who will restate the purpose of the research and its goals. They will then be assured that their information will remain anonymous and confidential.

NOTE: In addition to any debriefing materials, an electronic copy of the informed consent must be provided to the subjects if the study is conducted over the internet.

5.9 RISKS: List the potential risks and discomforts to the participants

While there are no benefits to participants in this study, results may help researchers and the greater public understand the effects of political and public violence on migrants, especially Mexican migrants, fleeing their home country.

Risk Estimation:

Minimal Risk – the probability and magnitude of harm or discomfort anticipated in the research are not greater in and of themselves than those ordinarily encountered in daily life or during the performance of routine physical or psychological examinations or tests.

☐ **More than minimal** – a slight increase in risk compared to the definition of minimal risk

☐ **Risk** – the subjects may experience reasonably foreseeable risks or discomforts

Definition: If evaluating a particular risk of research associated with a standard of care is a purpose of the research, then in general OHRP considers that particular risk to be "reasonably foreseeable" (45 CFR 46.116(a)(2)).

5.10 BENEFITS: List prospective benefits of conducting this research. Include direct benefits for participants, science, and society

There are no direct benefits to participants in this research study.

5.11 RISK to BENEFIT RATIO: Evaluate the level of risk relative to the potential benefits.

All risks are minimized due to the confidentiality of the study limiting the exposure of participants information. Participants will not directly benefit from participating in the study. Participation is voluntary, so the risk to benefit ratio is favorable to participants.

6. PARTICIPANT DESCRIPTION and RECRUITMENT

6.1 Sample Size (maximum number of participants): 100

6.2 Participant Age (minimum and maximum age group): 18-75

6.3 Description: Provide a simple description of who your ideal participant(s) would be: An ideal participant will be an adult Mexican or Central American immigrant with experience dealing with immigration laws and procedures both in their home country and in the United States.

Use separate lines to describe different types of participants to be used in this study

6.4 Targeting more than one type of participants: Explain multiple populations would be targeted (Example: parents & their minor children, teachers & their students, doctors & their patients, and etc.) and provide the numbers for each participant type below

While the majority of my research is geared toward Mexican immigrants considering increased militarized violence that they have faced at the hands of the government in the past, I aim to include Central American migrants due to increasing immigration patterns in the last decade. Occupation and other factors not pertaining to immigration are irrelevant to my research. Out of the 100 participants, I will attempt to interview both groups equally.

6.5 Participant population (Select ALL that apply):

Healthy Adults (18 years or older)		Minors (less than 18 years old)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Adults (not included above)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Prisoners (COMPLETE APPENDIX A)	
MTSU Psychology Research Pool (complete section 6.7)		Pregnant Women	<input type="checkbox"/>
Amazon Turk Workers		Mentally Handicapped	<input type="checkbox"/>
Qualtrics panel	<input type="checkbox"/>	Mentally Disabled	<input type="checkbox"/>
Senior Citizens (65 years or old)		Physically Ill	
		Disabled	<input type="checkbox"/>

6.6 Recruitment Scripts & Methods

Please visit <https://mtsu.edu/irb/FAQ/Recruitment.php> for more information on participant recruitment.

Select the type(s) of recruitment method to be used:

☐ IRB Flyer

☒ IRB Recruitment Email¹⁴

Word of mouth¹⁴

☐ Telephone¹⁴

☐ Regular Mail¹⁴

¹⁴Send separate transcripts for each type of recruitment selected above as a separate document. If contacting the participants by email or telephone or regular mail, explain how you originally obtained their contact information.

☐ Web posting

☐ Social media

Prescreen:

Please submit a recruitment script for word-of-mouth

6.7 How will participants be recruited and selected for this research? Describe the recruitment steps starting from the initial contacts. Include compensation (inducement) to participants. Recruitment script(s) must be submitted with this application.

Refer: <https://www.mtsu.edu/irb/FAQ/Recruitment.php>

Describe the recruitment steps: Participants will be recruited through snowball sampling and via email through the Tennessee Immigrant and Refugee Rights Coalition, NICE, and by word of mouth. An email will be sent to representatives of these organizations. Participation will be voluntary and anonymous. Procedures will focus solely on participants experiences with immigration, and will not include any questions concerning their current immigration status. Interviews will be conducted in-person at the South East Public Library or at the interviewees discretion.

NOTE: If the participants are to be drawn from an institution or organization (e.g., hospital, social service agency, prison, school, etc.) which has the responsibility for the participants, then documentation of permission from that institution must be submitted before final approval can be given (<https://www.mtsu.edu/irb/FAQ/PermissionLetters.php>).

6.8 Inclusion/Exclusion: Provide a list of inclusion/exclusion criteria for the proposed research and justify any demographics (e.g. sex, race, economic status, sexual orientation) that have been excluded.

Inclusions: The criteria for the proposed project are Mexican and Central American migrants over the age of 18.
Exclusions: Participants who do not fall into the category will not be interviewed because the proposed research focuses on analyzing political factors within Mexico specifically. Immigrants not included in this group may not apply because of this.

6.9 Inducement and Compensation:

☒ NOT Applicable

6.10 Recruit Psychology Research Pool (SONA):

☒ NOT Applicable

Refer: (<http://mtsu.sona-systems.com/>)

6.11 Recruiting Amazon Mechanical Turk workers

☒ NOT Applicable

Complete *MTurk Additional information Page* (Form F023 from <https://mtsu.edu/irb/forms.php>)

6.12 Enrolling Qualtrics Panel members as participants

☒ NOT Applicable

Complete *Qualtrics Panel Additional Information Page* (Form F023b from <https://mtsu.edu/irb/forms.php>)

7 CONFIDENTIALITY

7.1 Personal Information: Select ALL those apply from the following list of identifying information (but not limited to) that will be recorded from your research participants.

☒ Simple demographics

☒ Voice recordings

The above personal information are collected as research data

☒ Yes ☐ No

The above personal information are collected for administrative purposes

☒ Yes ☐ No

Provide additional explanation if needed:

Individuals information will be protected in all data resulting from this study. No personal information will be collected other than basic demographic descriptors such as ethnicity, age, and gender. Data will only be accessible to interviewers conducting interviews.

7.2 JUSTIFICATION - Provide a justification for why each type of information listed above is necessary for this study and also explain how that information will be protected/destroyed

Simple demographic information is essential to my study because it will allow me to group and develop data in order to effectively draw conclusions on the relationship between corruption and immigration during the research process.

7.3 DATA STORAGE - Where will research materials be stored? If anywhere other than an MTSU faculty researcher's office, please describe why the faculty researcher's office is not secure; include an address where data will be stored.

Data will be stored in the faculty advisor's office in Peck Hall.

Mandatory Data Storage Requirements:

- All Study related records (documentation of informed consent, surveys, study notes, data records, and all correspondence) be stored securely for **at least 3 years** after data collection ends.
- Additionally, the Tennessee State data retention requirement may apply (*refer MTSU Policy 129: <https://www.mtsu.edu/policies/general/129.php>*).
- Records must be stored securely in a faculty member's office on campus for 3 years. (Or another secure location if there is reason to believe the faculty member's office is not secure. These arrangements must be approved).
- Subsequently, the data may be destroyed in a manner that maintains confidentiality and anonymity of the research subjects.

7.4 List anyone other than the investigators mentioned in page 1 who will have direct access to the research participants or their primary data. Consider research assistants, transcribers, statisticians, and others who may be present during the research or have access to the data records. These individuals must also submit Human Subjects Training Certificates.

There will be no other researchers/assistants in the research process besides myself.

8 INFORMED CONSENT

- Adult participants only; Use Appendix B for describing the consent process involving minors
- Refer <https://www.mtsu.edu/irb/FAQ/ConsentAndAssent.php> for more information

8.1 Will informed consent be obtained from the participants?

☒ Yes

Consent waiver is permitted only in rare conditions.

8.2 Will you collect signed consent forms?

☒ Yes

Each participant must be provided with a copy of the informed consent signed by the PI/FA regardless if participant signatures are collected or not.

8.3 Will you obtain consent verbally?

☒ NO

Each participant must be provided with a copy of the informed consent signed by the PI/FA regardless if participant signatures are collected or not.

8.4 Will you administer the informed consent by VIRTUAL/ONLINE methods?

☒ NONE – The informed consent will be administered in person

8.5 Will the participants receive compensation/inducement for enrolling?

☒ NO

8.6 Give a description of your consent “process”. Include who is administering the consent information, where is it obtained, how is it administered and etc.?

Consent will be administered through a informed consent form by researchers on the day of the interview. An informed consent form will be obtained from MTSU's IRB, completed by the researcher and finally completed by the participant. Additionally, researchers will emphasize that participants may withdraw consent at any time. Following the completion of the informed consent document, interviewees will then complete the COVID-19 form to inform interviewers of their current health status.

Use Section 5.6 to describe the consent process when involving ADULT participants. When enrolling minors, use Appendix B for explaining parental consent and child assent.

Prescreen:

The description in 8.6 is not clear because there are two modes of data collection being done this protocol. Please describe if the in person informed consent will also cover the email survey. In other words, how will informed consent be administered for the in-person interviews and the email survey? Is there an order in which the two data collections would take place?

8.7 MANDATORY Informed Consent Elements Check List:

Select “yes” if the element appears in your consent document, if it does not check “no”. If you check no to any item you must complete the request for waiver of consent. See Appendix G.

A statement that the study involves research and the true purpose of the research (If using deceit, check no and justify in Appendix G).	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/>
A description of all the procedures in detail to be followed and the expected duration	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/>
Foreseeable risks or discomforts to the participant	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/>
Benefits to the participant or others (NOT COMPENSATION)	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/>
Disclosure of appropriate alternative procedures or courses of treatment	N/A <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/>
A statement describing the extent of confidentiality of records identifying the subject will be maintained	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/>
Explanation for compensation (inducement) for participation (not listed under the benefits section) along with any requirements and qualifications for receiving the proposed compensation	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/>
A statement regarding compensation to participants in case of injury	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/>
Contact information for the researcher and the Compliance Officer	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/>
A statement that participation is voluntary, there are no penalties for refusal to participate, and participation can be discontinued at will without loss of benefits.	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/>

9 TRAINING and EXPERTISE**This application WILL NOT be reviewed if training is incomplete****9.1 Will this research involve specialized procedures or methods that will require specific training or expertise?**

- ☒ NO
☐ YES Explain:

9.2 Provide a list of qualifications possessed by the investigating team to address any potential challenges during this study.

Investigating team has previously worked with the target group and understands the cultural significance and challenges that members of these groups face. Researchers have also completed required CITI training.

9.3 CITI Training *The following CITI course(s) and modules are mandatory. Review your CITI training certificate and check boxes for all those modules that have been completed by the entire research team.*

- The entire investigating team must complete “Social and Behavioral Research” basic course
- Students must also complete “Students in Research” module in addition
- Study-specific and participant-specific modules/training must also be completed
- [Click here](http://www.mtsu.edu/irb/requirements.php) or visit <http://www.mtsu.edu/irb/requirements.php> to learn more

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Social & Behavioral Research (SBR)	
Modules for All Researchers	Modules required based on researcher status and the study
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Belmont Report and CITI ... (ID: 1127) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> History and Ethical Principles - SBE (ID: 490) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Defining Research - SBE (ID: 491) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> The Federal Regulations - SBE (ID: 502) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Assessing Risk - SBE (ID: 503) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Informed Consent - SBE (ID: 504) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Privacy and Confidentiality - SBE (ID: 505) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Conflicts of Interest in (ID: 488) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> MTSU Module DEMO (ID 1073)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Students in Research (ID 1321) MANDATORY FOR STUDENTS <input type="checkbox"/> Research with Prisoners – SBE (ID: 506) <input type="checkbox"/> Research with children – SBE (ID 507) <input type="checkbox"/> Research in Public Schools – SBE (ID 508) <input type="checkbox"/> International Research – SBE (ID 509) <input type="checkbox"/> International Studies (ID 971) <input type="checkbox"/> Internet-based research – SBE (ID 510) <input type="checkbox"/> Research and HIPAA (ID 14) <input type="checkbox"/> Research on Workers/Employees (ID 483) <input type="checkbox"/> Hot Topics (ID 487) <input type="checkbox"/> IRB Member module (ID 816) <input type="checkbox"/> IRB Administrators (ID 13813)

10 APPLICATION CHECKLIST

10.1 Check List: To be completed by the PI Please READ and INITIAL each item. **Incomplete applications will NOT be prescreened.**

- ☒ The application is complete
- ☒ Faculty Advisor information and signature included if the PI is a student
- ☒ CITI certificates attached
- ☒ Participant information and methods to enroll is provided
- ☒ Recruitment materials/scripts for enrolling participants is/are attached
- ☐ Signup information for Psychology Department Research Pool (if applicable) is provided
- ☒ Consent template(s) for all types of proposed data collection methods is/are included
- ☐ Alteration to consent process or changes to the standard consent template are justified
- ☒ Surveys, questionnaires, tests, interview forms/scripts attached – include a PDF of the entire survey if the study is being administered via Qualtrics
- ☐ Qualtrics link(s) for studies conducted online is/are provided
- ☒ Appendix section(s) for additional methods are completed
- ☐ Permission letters on official letterhead for conducting research at non-MTSU sites
- ☒ Other:

10.2 Additional Procedural Information

Indicate below whether this study involves additional procedures listed below. Be sure to complete the selected appendices below the signature section

Appendix		Additional Procedure Information
COVID-19		Risk for COVID-19 infection
<input type="checkbox"/>	A	Risk
<input type="checkbox"/>	B	Minors as Participants
<input type="checkbox"/>	C	Psychological Intervention
<input type="checkbox"/>	D	Deception
<input type="checkbox"/>	E	Physiological Intervention
<input type="checkbox"/>	F	Biomedical Procedures & Biospecimen
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	G	Changes to Informed Consent Complete if necessary
<input type="checkbox"/>	J	Monetary compensation for participation
<input type="checkbox"/>	K	Physical interaction (intervention/assessment & other)
<input type="checkbox"/>	L	Analysis of existing data not eligible for exemption

11 DECLARATION

Sign by entering your name in the fields below. Student PI's MUST enter their name by logging into their MTSU account. Although not mandatory, faculty researchers and advisors are encouraged to enter their name by logging to their MTSU account.

11.1 PI Signature:

I certify by entering my name below that:

- 1) the information provided for this project is accurate;
- 2) no other procedures will be used in this project;
- 3) any modifications in this project will be submitted for approval prior to use; AND
- 4) I have read and fully understand my responsibilities as the PI

(<https://www.mtsu.edu/irb/FAQ/ResponsibilitiesOfPI.php>)

Dimend Little

04/18/2022

***Name of the Investigator (PI)**

Date

Enter your full name

11.2 Faculty Advisor (if the PI is a student)

By entering my name below I certify that this project is under my direct supervision and that I am responsible for insuring that all provisions of approval are complied with by the investigator.

Stephen Morris

4/11/2022

Name of the Faculty Advisor (FA)**

Date

Enter your full name and date

APPENDIX SECTION – ADDITIONAL PROCEDURAL INFORMATION

- Complete only those apply to your research

APPENDIX COVID-19

MANDATORY if the investigators will have direct physical contact with the participants

Complete this Appendix if human subjects participating in this proposed research project may be directly in physical contact with the investigator(s)

- 1) Identify how and where the participant faces the potential risk for COVID-19 exposure
Participants face the potential risk for COVID-19 exposure by participating in in-person interviewing sections.
- 2) JUSTIFICATION. Explain why you believe the potential exposure to COVID-19 to the subject are so outweighed by the sum of the benefit to the subject and the importance of the knowledge to be gained as to warrant a decision to allow the subject to accept the risks. Discuss the alternative ways of conducting this research and why the one chosen is superior.
In-person interviewing is more effective in building rapport with participants and may increase encouragement and recruitment by previous participants. Additionally, in-person interviewing minimizes the risk for distractions and technical difficulties when conducted through zoom or other online meeting platforms.
- 3) Will all the investigators who come in contact with the participants be fully vaccinated?
Yes.
- 4) Will all the participants be fully vaccinated against COVID-19?
Participants will be given the option to voluntarily disclose their vaccination status. However, being fully vaccinated will not be required for the study.
- 5) Describe how you plan to minimize the risk for viral infection
Participants will be strongly encouraged to wear masks but it will remain optional.
- 6) What steps do you plan to take prior to the physical interaction?
Interviews will be scheduled one to two weeks in advance to give both myself and interviewees to prepare themselves for physical interaction. A survey will be conducted before interviewing begins to document any symptoms of COVID-19 and concerns with the interviewing process.
- 7) What is your strategy to screen for health condition of the investigator(s) on the day of the prospective research interaction?
Both investigators and interviewers will complete a COVID-19 health assessment in person before interviewing.
- 8) What is your strategy survey the participants for potential infection?
Zoom and other virtual interviews will remain optional for participants and they will have the discretion in choosing which one to participate in.
- 9) What steps do you plan take in the event an investigator or a participant should test positive for COVID-19?
If an investigator or a participant should test positive for COVID-19, interviews will be rescheduled at the discretion of the interviewee. A negative Covid-19 test will be required to continue the process.

----- End of Appendix COVID-19 -----

APPENDIX G

REQUEST FOR ALTERNATIVE CONSENT PROCESS

Starting from AY 2021, this appendix will be used to provide additional details on various types of consent processes and their documentation. Please complete this appendix if you do not plan to obtain traditional in person informed consent with participant signature.

Under 45 CFR 46.116(d) the IRB may waive the requirement for obtaining informed consent or approve a consent procedure that leaves out or alters some or all of the elements of informed consent, provided that the IRB finds and documents that all of the following four criteria are met:

- a) the research involves no more than minimal risk to the subjects;
- b) the waiver or alteration will not adversely affect the rights and welfare of the subjects;
- c) the research could not practicably be carried out without the waiver or alteration;
- d) whenever appropriate, the subjects will be provided with additional pertinent information after participation.

G.0 Type of changes to informed consent:

- ☐ Web-based informed consent using Qualtrics – Complete G.5
- ☐ Zoom or Telephone interviews – Complete G.6
- ☐ Other – Continue to G.1

G.1 Are you requesting a waiver of obtaining informed consent? (i.e., you will not obtain informed consent at all. e.g., observational study and informing participants that they are in a research study would make the research impossible.)

- ☐ Yes ☐ NO
Explain if Yes:

G.2 Are you requesting that physically signed consent forms are not obtained? (e.g., you are conducting research online and cannot obtain signatures; you wish to not obtain signatures to protect the participants, etc)

- ☐ Yes ☐ NO
Explain if Yes:

G.3 Are you requesting approval to alter the consent form such that not all the required elements of consent are included? (i.e., you checked “no” to some elements in the checkbox for informed consent)

- ☐ Yes ☐ NO

Which elements from the informed consent are you seeking to alter or remove?

G.4 If you answered yes to G.1 through G.3, then complete this link:

- a. How does the research involve no more than minimal risk?
- b. How will a waiver of informed consent not adversely affect the rights and welfare of the participants?
- c. Why could the research not practicably be carried out without the waiver or alteration?

- d. If appropriate, how will subjects be provided with additional pertinent information after participation?

G.5 Online informed consent:

Refer <https://mtsu.edu/irb/FAQ/OnlineDataCollection.php>

Describe the process administering informed consent starting with how the participants will access the Qualtrics:

Qualtrics data collection – Mandatory consent requirements:

- All exclusion inclusion criteria must be clearly disclosed prior to the consent
- The first page of the study must be the informed consent form
- Consent to participate must be explicitly asked and separate responses must be entertained by clearly indicated boxes to accept or deny
- An age-verification question with an active response must be added
- The text for informed consent should be provided to the participant as part of debriefing or a followup email whichever is approved by the IRB

Visit www.mtsu.edu/irb and click on IRB Forms to download one of the informed consent templates meant for online administration. Based on your which form you downloaded, make a selection below:

- ☐ Locked online consent template is used
☐ Unlocked free format online consent template is used

The Qualtrics link for administering informed consent provided for IRB review AFTER the link has been tested by the PI. Use the following check list to test the Q

Test the online consent before completing this check list

<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	The protocol ID, study title, name of PI and faculty advisor (if applicable) and space for approval/expiration dates are provided legibly.
<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	All inclusion and exclusion requirements are clearly stated and additional click box items are added if necessary
<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> N/A	Compensation information and adequate disclosure for eligibility are clearly stated and additional click boxes are inserted if necessary
<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	Contact details for the researchers and the office compliance are provided
<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	Consent to participant is entertained by two distinct responses
<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	Age verification of the participant is also done as in the consent question above
<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	The survey will not begin unless all necessary boxes are clicked
<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	If a participant fails to consent or ignores one or more of the clickable boxes, then one of the following action is done: <input type="checkbox"/> The survey ends and the participant is directed to a "Thank You" page <input type="checkbox"/> A good faith reminder is given and the survey will move to debriefing if the participant continues to not click the mandatory boxes
<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	The survey has been administered to someone who is not familiar with the study. The person who took and tested the survey is: (enter the full name of the person) and this person found that the time duration for completing the entire survey is compatible with what is displayed in the consent script.
<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	The consent script displayed online is identical to the consent document submitted for IRB review (minor formatting/font changes are allowed)

G.6 Interview by Telephone or Zoom:

Instruction:

a. Zoom Interview:

The participants will receive a copy of the informed consent via email. S/he will physically sign and send a scan back to the investigator. Or, the participant will simply write a response text indicating s/he is interested in the study. The PI will go ahead and arrange the zoom meeting. Prior to the interview, the PI will refresh the participant with the important steps of the study and ensure the participant read the informed consent script sent by email. The PI will then document the informed consent process and store in his/her records.

b. Telephone Interview:

Similar to the Zoom informed consent described above. The participants will receive a copy of the informed consent via email. S/he will physically sign and send a scan back to the investigator. Or, the participant will simply write a response text indicating s/he is interested in the study. The PI will go ahead and arrange the telephone interview. Prior to the interview, the PI will refresh the participant with the important steps of the study and ensure the participant read the informed consent script sent by email. The PI will then document the informed consent process and store in his/her records. The main difference between the Zoom and telephone informed consent is that the latter would be much shorter

Description:

- i. Have you read and understand the instructions above?
- ii. Do you plan to make any changes to the informed consent process and documentation from what is described above?
- iii. How will a consent through Zoom or a telephone call not adversely affect the rights and welfare of the participants?
- iv. If appropriate, how will subjects be provided with additional pertinent information after participation?

----- End of Appendix G (Informed Consent) -----

IRB

INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD

Office of Research Compliance,
010A Sam Ingram Building,
2269 Middle Tennessee Blvd
Murfreesboro, TN 37129



IRBF016: INFORMED CONSENT

(Use this consent template for in person or virtual interactions)

General Information

1. Use this consent form for requesting a participant for
 - a. In person interviews or other interactions
 - b. Virtual interviews or other interactions using Zoom
 - c. Online consent via Qualtrics
2. This template is suitable for studies that qualify for Expedited as well as a full review.
3. Alterations and waiver of this template are strongly discouraged. The elements not applicable to the study can be indicated by the provided check boxes with a suitable justification.
4. Web-based Studies – this form is not currently available for web-based administration through Qualtrics.
5. The Faculty Advisor information will be removed at the review/approval stage if the PI is NOT a student.
6. COVID-19: for in person protocols, there is a COVID-19 avoidance plan in the informed consent section. An extra page for collecting participant information to enable contact tracing in the event the participant, or a person the participant came in contact with was found to be positive for COVID-19. This "extra page" is used only for contact tracing and will be destroyed after few days in accordance with CDC guidelines.

Instructions

1. This form contains TWO sections:
 - A. General Information section – signed by the researcher and given to the participant
 - B. The signature section has to be signed by the participantPlease note that there are multiple options: first one for traditional pen signature, a second option is for virtual administration via Zoom, and a third option for Qualtrics
2. If signature waiver is approved or required by the IRB, then the signature section will be filled by the PI with a random identifier and saved with rest of the research records
3. Other than the actual signatures, the text boxes in two sections must be properly completed before submitting for IRB approval.
4. The investigators have the option for requesting the removal of certain elements in this form by entering their justification in the boxes highlighted in yellow. All of the pre-approval request boxes will be removed at the approval stage.

IRB

INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD

Office of Research Compliance,
010A Sam Ingram Building,
2269 Middle Tennessee Blvd
Murfreesboro, TN 37129



IRBF016 – Participant Informed Consent

A. INFORMATION AND DISCLOSURE SEGMENT

(Participant Copy)

Study Title The Great Migration: Political Corruption as a Trigger for Mexican Immigration
Primary Investigator(s) Dimend Little (Student)
Contact information dkl2z@mtmail.mtsu.edu
Department & Institution MTSU Department of Political Science and International Relations
Faculty Advisor Stephen Morris **Department** Political Science and International Relations

Protocol ID 22-2142 7ei **Approval:** 04/29/2022 **Expiration:** 04/30/2023

The following information is provided to inform you about the research project in which you have been invited to participate. Please read this disclosure and feel free to ask any questions. The investigators must answer all of your questions and you must be given a signed copy of this disclosure.

- Your participation in this research study is voluntary.
- You are also free to withdraw from this study at any time without loss of any benefits.
- In the event new information becomes available that may affect the risks or benefits associated with this research study, you will be notified so that you can make an informed decision at that time.

For additional information on your rights as a participant in this study, please contact the Middle Tennessee State University (MTSU) Office of Compliance (Tel 615-494-8918 or send your emails to irb_information@mtsu.edu. (URL: <http://www.mtsu.edu/irb>).

Please read this section and sign Section B if you wish to enroll in this study. The researcher will provide you with a copy of this disclosure form for you to keep for your future reference.

1. What are the prime types of physical contact the participant will have?

The participant will have the following type(s) of contact(s) with the investigators or/and other participants at least sometimes during this research:

1.1 Virtual Interactions

Qualtrics Zoom Telephone ☒ Other: Email response to survey

1.2 In person interactions

☒ With PPE Without PPE With Social Distancing Without Social Distancing

The participants will be asked to provide their contact details to be used by MTSU COVID-19 task force for contact tracing if needed

2. What is the main category of this research?

2.1 Educational Tests

2.3 Psychological intervention or procedures

2.5 Medical Evaluation

2.

2.2 ☒ Social/Behavioral Evaluation

2.4 Physical Evaluation or Procedures

2.6 Clinical Research

3. What is the purpose of this study?

The purpose of this study is to investigate the effects of political corruption on Mexican and Central American emigration. This study aims to examine features of the Mexican political system as push factors towards emigrating. General push factors may include the lack of economic opportunity, proximity to the United States, lax emigration structures, and political and

public violence. Research will be conducted through in-depth interviews to analyze factors contributing to participants migration.

4. What type of data will be collected from you?

Written and voice recorded data will be collected during interviews.

5. What are procedures we intend on doing to collect the above described data?

Researchers will take notes of important factors pertaining to corruption and immigration to compare following the conclusion of the interview with previous participants answers to find commonalities in experiences. Voice recordings will be collected to aid in the analyses of interviewees interviews.

5.1 ☒ **Audio recording** 5.2 Video Recording 5.3 Photography 5.4 **NO video recording**

6. What will you be asked to do in this study?

Participants will be asked to provide information surrounding their immigration process to the United States. You will not be asked to disclose current immigration status or any other information that you are uncomfortable with sharing.

7. What are we planning to do with the data collected using your participation?

Data collected will be compared to find commonalities between interviewees experiences and draw conclusions that synthesize corruption and immigration. Your data will not be shared with anyone besides the sole researcher.

8. What are the expected results of this study and how will they be disseminated?

Researchers hypothesizes that there is a direct link between corruption and immigration. Data produced by research will only be utilized in answering the main research question and will not be seen or used by anyone other than the sole researcher.

9. What is the approximate time commitment not including your preparation time for participating in this study?

It is anticipated that it will take approximately one hour to conduct interviews. Interviewees will be informed if further interviews are required. Further interviews remain at the discretion of interviewees.

10. What are your expected costs to you, your effort, and etc.?

Research will be conducted at no cost to participants or the researchers apart from transportation expenses to and from the interviewing location.

11. What are the potential discomforts, inconveniences, and/or possible risks that can be reasonably expected as a result of participation in this study?

The risks of participating in this study are no more than what is experienced in daily life.

12. What are the risks and bodily harm due to COVID-19 exposure?

Although the MTSU IRB considers this research as "no more than minimal risk." the participants will be in physical contact with the PI and other participants during this study. Therefore, the participants will be exposed to the risk of contracting COVID-19.

- The participants must adhere by the following to reduce the risk for infection.***

Participants must disclosed whether they have been in contact with someone who may have been possibly exposed to Covid-19. Additionally, participants will complete a symptom survey to ensure that they are not currently experiencing any symptoms associated with Covid-19.

- **The investigator will follow these precautions:** Researchers are fully vaccinated and will complete a health assessment before interviews. They will wear a mask and socially distance during scheduled interviews.
- **COVID-19 Contact Tracing:** The participants will be asked to provide their contact details will be given to the MTSU COVID-19 task force if someone you came in contact with tested positive for COVID-19. Your contact details provided in this form will be destroyed after a few days if no positivity of COVID-19 is detected. This study will add to limited research in the fields of immigration and corruption. Additionally, by highlighting challenges faced in the immigration process, society may be more sympathetic towards the cause of latin migrants and encourage better immigration policies and structure.

13. What are the anticipated benefits from this study?

a. The benefits to science and humankind that may result from this research:

While there are no benefits to participants in this study, results may help researchers and the greater public understand the effects of political and public violence on migrants, especially Mexican migrants, fleeing their home country.

b. The direct benefits to you: There are no direct benefits to the participants.

14. How will you be compensated for your participation?

There will be no compensation for participation.

15. Will you be compensated for any study-related injuries?

There are no predicted study related injuries. Compensation will not be warranted.

16. Circumstances under which the researcher may withdraw you from this study:

Participants may voluntarily withdraw at any moment. The researcher may withdraw participants from the study if they are non-compliant during the interviewing process such as being unwilling to answer questions or if they have not properly completed required forms for the study.

17. What happens if you choose to withdraw your participation?

Participants can withdraw from the research study at any time. When withdrawing from the study, participants should inform the interviewer that he/she wishes to withdraw. At the time of withdrawal, participants should let them know if he/she will allow the continued collection and or use of his/her information.

18. Can you stop the participation any time after initially agreeing to give consent/assent?

Yes, participants may withdraw from the study at any time.

19. Contact Information. If you should have any questions about this research study or possibly injury, please feel free to contact Dimend Little by telephone 615-924-5047 or by email dkl2z@mtmail.mtsu OR my faculty advisor, Stephen Morris, at stephen.morris@mtsu.edu. For additional information about giving consent of your rights as a participant in this study, to discuss problems, concerns and questions, or to offer input, please feel free to contact the MTSU IRB by email: compliance@mtsu.edu or by telephone (615) 494 8918.

20. Confidentiality. All efforts, within reason, will be made to keep your personal information private but total privacy cannot be promised. Your information may be shared with MTSU or the government, such as the Middle Tennessee State University Institutional Review Board, Federal Government Office for Human Research Protections, *if* you or someone else is in danger or if we are required to do so by law.

- 21. Confidentiality and COVID-19:** Your information will be provided to the University COVID-19 task force or other public health officials in the event you or one of the research participants or investigators should test positive for COVID-19. Complete the COVID-19 Contract Tracking Page after you agree to consent.

You do not have to do anything if you decide not to participate. If you wish to enroll however, please enter your name and age in the attached Segment B document and sign in the space provided.

Consent obtained by:

Researcher's Signature

Name and Title

Date

IRBF016 – Participant Informed Consent
B. Consent Segment 1 - IN PERSON INTERACTION
(Researchers' Copy)

Study Title The Great Migration: Political Corruption as a Trigger for Mexican Immigration
Primary Investigator(s) Dimend Little **(Student)**
Contact information dkl2z@mtmail.mtsu.edu
Department & Institution MTSU Department of Political Science and International Relations
Faculty Advisor Stephen Morris **Department** Political Science and International Relations

Protocol ID 22-2142 7ei **Approval:** 04/29/2022 **Expiration:** 04/30/2023

PARTICIPANT SECTION

(To be filled by the participant and returned to the researcher)	Participants give consent
I have read this informed consent document	<input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Yes
The research procedures to be conducted have been explained to me verbally	<input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Yes
I understand all of the interventions and all my questions have been answered	<input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Yes
I am aware of the potential risks of the study	<input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Yes
I understand that I will be audio recorded and analyzed	<input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Yes

By entering my name and signing below, I affirm that I freely and voluntarily choose to participate in this study. I understand I can withdraw from this study at any time without facing any consequences.

Name and Signature of the Participant **Date** **Participant's Age**

RESEARCHER SECTION

(To be filled by an investigator and the FA if applicable)

Informed Consent obtained by: _____ Faculty Verification (if administered by a student)

Name **Signature** **Date** **Name** **Signature** **Date**

COVID-19 Contact Tracing**PARTICIPANT SECTION**

(To be filled by the consenting participant and returned to the researcher)

Confidentiality and COVID-19:

Your information will be provided to the University COVID-19 task force or other public health officials in the event you or one of the research participants or investigators should test positive for COVID-19.

Name:
Contact
Address:
Telephone:
Email Address:

Office Use:

Information Date: (Today's Date)
Expiration Date: (Date on which this sheet will be destroyed if no COVID-19 is detected)

Instruction to PI:

- Destroy this page if no COVID-19 is detected by the expiration date above
- If positivity for COVID-19 is known, then provide the participant contact information to MTSU's COVID-19 task force

Ensure to cut the box out when providing the participant's contact details and hide any protocol details from being transmitted.

IRB

INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD

Office of Research Compliance,
010A Sam Ingram Building,
2269 Middle Tennessee Blvd
Murfreesboro, TN 37129
FWA: 00005331/IRB Regn. 0003571



IRBN001 - EXPEDITED PROTOCOL APPROVAL NOTICE

Monday, May 02, 2022

Protocol Title *The Great Flight: Political Corruption as a Trigger for Mexical Emigration*
Protocol ID *22-2142 7ei*

Principal Investigator *Dimend Little* (Student) **Faculty Advisor:** Stephen Morris
Co-Investigators NONE
Investigator Email(s) *dki2z@mtmail.mtsu.edu; Stephen.morris@mtsu.edu*
Department Political Science
Funding NONE

Dear Investigator(s),

The above identified research proposal has been reviewed by the MTSU IRB through the **EXPEDITED** mechanism under 45 CFR 46.110 and 21 CFR 56.110 within the category (7) *Research on individual or group characteristics or behavior*. A summary of the IRB action is tabulated below:

IRB Action	APPROVED for ONE YEAR		
Date of Expiration	4/30/2023	<i>Date of Approval:</i> 5/2/22	<i>Recent Amendment:</i> NONE
Sample Size	ONE HUNDRED (100)		
Participant Pool	<i>Target Population:</i> Primary Classification: General Adults (18 or older) Specific Classification: Mexican or Central American Imigrant		
Type of Interaction	<input type="checkbox"/> Non-interventional or Data Analysis <input type="checkbox"/> Virtual/Remote/Online interaction <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> In person or physical interaction – Mandatory COVID-19 Management		
Exceptions	Permitted to conduct participant prescreening via email		
Restrictions	1. Mandatory SIGNED Informed Consent. 2. Other than the exceptions above, identifiable data/artifacts, such as, audio/video data, photographs, handwriting samples, personal address, driving records, social security number, and etc., MUST NOT be collected. Recorded identifiable information must be deidentified as described in the protocol. 3. Mandatory Final report (refer last page). 4. CDC guidelines and MTSU safe practice must be followed		
Approved Templates	<i>IRB Templates:</i> Recruitment Email and In-person Informed Consent <i>Non-MTSU Templates:</i> Recruitment Scripts		
Research Inducement	NONE		
Comments	NONE		

Post-approval Requirements

The PI and FA must read and abide by the post-approval conditions (Refer “Quick Links” in the bottom):

- **Reporting Adverse Events:** The PI must report research-related adversities suffered by the participants, deviations from the protocol, misconduct, and etc., within 48 hours from when they were
- **Final Report:** The FA is responsible for submitting a final report to close-out this protocol before **4/30/2023** (Refer to the Continuing Review section below); **REMINDERS WILL NOT BE SENT**. Failure to close-out or request for a continuing review may result in penalties including cancellation of the data collected using this protocol and/or withholding student diploma.
- **Protocol Amendments:** An IRB approval must be obtained for all types of amendments, such as: addition/removal of subject population or investigating team; sample size increases; changes to the research sites (appropriate permission letter(s) may be needed); alternation to funding; and etc. The proposed amendments must be requested by the FA in an addendum request form. The proposed changes must be consistent with the approval category and they must comply with expedited review requirements
- **Research Participant Compensation:** Compensation for research participation must be awarded as proposed in Chapter 6 of the Expedited protocol. The documentation of the monetary compensation must Appendix J and MUST NOT include protocol details when reporting to the MTSU Business Office.
- **COVID-19:** Regardless whether this study poses a threat to the participants or not, refer to the COVID-19 Management section for important information for the FA.

Continuing Review (The PI has requested early termination)

Although this protocol can be continued for up to THREE years, The PI has opted to end the study by **4/30/2023**. The PI must close-out this protocol by submitting a final report before **4/30/2023**. Failure to close-out may result in penalties that include cancellation of the data collected using this protocol and delays in graduation of the student PI.

Post-approval Protocol Amendments:

The current MTSU IRB policies allow the investigators to implement minor and significant amendments that would fit within this approval category. **Only TWO procedural amendments will be entertained per year** (changes like addition/removal of research personnel are not restricted by this rule).

Date	Amendment(s)	IRB Comments
NONE	NONE.	NONE

Other Post-approval Actions:

The following actions are done subsequent to the approval of this protocol on request by the PI/FA or on recommendation by the IRB or by both.

Date	IRB Action(s)	IRB Comments
NONE	NONE	NONE

COVID-19 Management:

The PI must follow social distancing guidelines and other practices to avoid viral exposure to the participants and other workers when physical contact with the subjects is made during the study.

- The study must be stopped if a participant or an investigator should test positive for COVID-19 within 14 days of the research interaction. This must be reported to the IRB as an “adverse event.”
- The MTSU’s “Return-to-work” questionnaire found in Pipeline must be filled by the investigators on the day of the research interaction prior to physical contact.
- PPE must be worn if the participant would be within 6 feet from the each other or with an investigator.
- Physical surfaces that will come in contact with the participants must be sanitized between use
- **FA’s Responsibility:** The FA is given the administrative authority to make emergency changes to protect the wellbeing of the participants and student researchers during the COVID-19 pandemic. However, the FA must notify the IRB after such changes have been made. The IRB will audit the changes at a later date and the FA will be instructed to carryout remedial measures if needed.

Data Management & Storage:

All research-related records (signed consent forms, investigator training and etc.) must be retained by the PI or the faculty advisor (if the PI is a student) at the secure location mentioned in the protocol

application. The data must be stored for at least three (3) years after the study is closed. Additional Tennessee State data retention requirement may apply (*refer "Quick Links" for MTSU policy 129 below*). The data may be destroyed in a manner that maintains confidentiality and anonymity of the research subjects.

The MTSU IRB reserves the right to modify/update the approval criteria or change/cancel the terms listed in this letter without prior notice. Be advised that IRB also reserves the right to inspect or audit your records if needed.

Sincerely,

Institutional Review Board
Middle Tennessee State University

Quick Links:

- Post-approval Responsibilities: <http://www.mtsu.edu/irb/FAQ/PostApprovalResponsibilities.php>
- Expedited Procedures: <https://mtsu.edu/irb/ExpeditedProcedures.php>
- MTSU Policy 129: Records retention & Disposal: <https://www.mtsu.edu/policies/general/129.php>