

**SHOW ME YOUR PAPERS:
A CONTENT ANALYSIS OF BARRIERS
OF ANTI-IMMIGRATION
LEGISLATION IN THE UNITED STATES**

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Research Question

- How has the implementation and creation of anti-immigration laws created barriers for immigrants?

Thesis

- There is a progression in the amount of restrictions and barriers placed upon immigrant individuals in the United States with the development of each new piece anti-immigration legislation.

Literature Review

- SB 1070 And Copycat Legislation
- Trends, Barriers And Reduction Of Equal Opportunities
- Mexican Immigration to the United States: A Case Study

SB 1070 And Copycat Legislation

- Work together to discourage and deter the unlawful entry and presence of aliens and economic activity by persons unlawfully present in the United States (SB 1070, 2000)
- Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, North Carolina, Ohio, Oklahoma, South Carolina, Tennessee and Texas (Lacayo, 2011)
- June 9th, 2011 House Bill 56 was signed into law in Alabama (HB 56, 2011)

Trends, Barriers And Reduction Of Equal Opportunities

- Environment of racial profiling, encouraged state-sanctioned discrimination and discrimination in schools based off of perceived ethnicity has arisen and attendance has decreased (NILC, 2012)
- Making or attempting to make business transactions with Alabama government officials a felony and also includes a school enrollment provision and a contract provision that makes contracts void if the other party is undocumented; three provisions not required in the earlier SB 1070 (NILC, 2012)

Mexican Immigration to the United States: A Case Study

- Estimated six million of Mexican immigrants were undocumented, representing around fifty six percent of the ten million undocumented immigrants in the United States at that time (Hanson, 2006)
- “In the process of rediscovering the Mexico-diaspora affinity, observers have often overstated the political significance and intensity of the transborder connection and at times even romanticized the strength of the cultural bond” (Shain, 2000)

Theory: The Critical Race Theory

- Scholars interested in studying and transforming the relationship among race, racism, and power (Delgado, 2006)
- An immigrant's race and social class plays a role in influencing anti-immigrant laws and policy-making due to popular misconceptions about immigrant individuals and specific racial groups.
- Questions claims of the current legal system and argues claims are a camouflage for the self-interest, power, and privilege of dominant groups in U.S. society (Solórzano, 1997)
- Policy recommendations generated from the focus on assimilation [to] maintain the status quo, ignore White privilege, and set the agenda to disadvantage racialized groups further (Romero, 2008)

Methodology

- Content Analysis
- Manifest and Latent coding
- Sample
 - SB 1070 and SB 1070 style legislation
 - Visited each state's government website to obtain copy of bills
 - Arranged chronologically and randomly selected 7 of 15 bills
- Coding
 - Opening coding

Findings

- Immigrant Identity
 - ▣ Frequency of negative descriptions
- Immigration Status
 - ▣ Acceptable vs. unacceptable immigration
- Basis For Profiling
 - ▣ Race, color, national origin and the extent allowed
- Creation Of Barriers
 - ▣ Education, employment verification, healthcare services and public benefits

Immigrant Identity

- Legal, illegal, unauthorized and unlawful used to depict a negative or positive identity
- Use of word illegal – 51 times in HB 56 of 66 total appearances
- Use of word legal – 1 time in HB 87 of 12 total appearances
- The more frequently that the word alien was used, the more frequently negative descriptions were also used – also the case in Arizona's SB 1070, Oklahoma's SB 908, Florida's HB 7809 and South Carolina's S 20
- The way the identity of immigrants was described shaped overall kind of terminology used within the bills

Immigration Status

- Acceptable vs. unacceptable immigration
- Acceptable - US citizen, foreign national, permanent resident or resident alien
 - ▣ Reference to United States government authorization
- Unacceptable - illegal alien, unauthorized alien, unlawful alien, illegal persons, etc
 - ▣ Use of words and terms to describe and define unwanted immigration and/or persons

Basis For Profiling

- Use of race, color, religion or national origin as a means for identifying undocumented immigrants
- Appeared in 7 of 8 bills analyzed and 4 of 4 passed bills
- HB 738 (2/17/2011) was mentioned 1 out of 11 times and accounted for 4% of total references to race, color, religion or national origin where as HB 56 (6/9/2011) was mentioned 8 out of 14 times and accounted for 33% of total appearances

Creation Of Barriers

- Education, employment verification, healthcare services and public benefits
- Only HB 56 (6/9/2011) passed restrictions in all four areas
- 7 of 8 laws expressed need for employment verification
- Creation of barriers for US citizens

Discussion

- ❑ Societal patterns
- ❑ Use of labels to characterize individuals – often to evoke emotions and compel action
- ❑ Labels frequently used to portray minority individuals in a negative light
- ❑ Role appearance plays in determining facts about individuals
- ❑ Profiling is allowed but only within specified extent
- ❑ Weaknesses/Strength
- ❑ Future for immigrants/immigration