

Influential Impartiality: A Linear Regression Model of the Effect of Committed Impartiality Pedagogy on Student Political Engagement

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Submitted: 2024, Oct 24; **Accepted:** 2024, Nov 27; **Published:** 2024, Nov 29

Citation: Blass, S. (2024). Influential Impartiality: A Linear Regression Model of the Effect of Committed Impartiality Pedagogy on Student Political Engagement. *Politi Sci Int*, 2(1), 01-10.

Abstract

In American secondary education, teachers are urged to avoid sharing political views due to concerns about political polarization. This has contributed to high school students' disengagement from national politics, often attributed to a lack of political discourse in schools. Recent studies have explored pedagogical or teaching strategies like committed impartiality (CI), in which teachers share their political views while encouraging open discussion among students, finding that short-term benefits of CI include improved understanding of political issues and increased civic awareness. However, the long-term effects of CI on student political engagement remain underexplored, as existing research mostly examines the long-term impact of neutral impartiality, where teachers avoid disclosing political beliefs altogether. This study aims to address this gap by examining the long-term impact of CI pedagogy on students' political involvement through linear regression analyses of an online Likert-scale survey (n=20). The survey, conducted among American high school students at an international school in Singapore, gathered data on students' experiences with CI pedagogy and their engagement with both "little p" politics (community-based initiatives) and "Big P" politics (national-level affairs). The analyses revealed a statistically significant and moderately positive correlation between CI pedagogy and student engagement with "little p" ($p < 0.01$) and "Big P" politics ($p < 0.05$). These findings reinforce existing literature on the positive impact of teacher political disclosure within the framework of committed impartiality. The study concludes that secondary education teachers sharing their political beliefs while maintaining a commitment to impartiality can increase students' political engagement. However, this study's cohort is limited to American citizens living in Singapore; thus, future research should examine whether this statistically significant relationship applies to American residents and explore the impact of various pedagogical strategies on student political engagement to identify the optimal approach to teacher political disclosure.

Keywords: Pedagogy, Committed Impartiality, "Little P" Politics, "Big P" Politics, Political Disclosure

1. Introduction

Political disclosure among teachers refers to educators publicly revealing their political beliefs or affiliations to their students and colleagues [1]. In American secondary educational settings, concerns over whether or not teachers should be allowed to disclose their political beliefs have ignited long-standing debates [2]. Proponents argue for the authenticity and relevance of educators sharing their political beliefs, mirroring the diversity of political perspectives in various aspects of life [3]. Conversely, opponents stress the importance of maintaining neutrality in educational settings, fearing potential biases and indoctrination [3].

Amidst these debates, there have been several accusations of political bias in grading and concerns over curriculum choices favoring a certain political ideology, raising concerns about classroom fairness and neutrality in the US [4]. Due to these

increasing tensions, teachers tend to refrain from sharing their political views in classroom environments; some teachers who have openly expressed their political beliefs have been accused of attempting to indoctrinate their students and have lost their jobs due to such allegations [5].

As the political climate in the US has become increasingly polarized, scholars have observed a trend among high school students: they are becoming less engaged with traditional "Big P" politics—electoral processes and government institutions [6]. This reduced interest among students stems from a prevailing perception that "Big P" politics is conflictual and inefficient [6]. As a result, students are becoming more interested in direct forms of lifestyle politics, which include community-based work and politics that emphasize self-expression—referred to as "little p" politics [6]. This apathy toward national-level politics has resulted in younger American demographics

having disproportionately lower voter turnout levels than older demographics [7]. Research has linked this disinterest in national politics to the increasingly polarized political climate in the United States and the lack of political discourse within secondary educational settings [7].

Recognizing the role of education in shaping political engagement, recent literature has explored different pedagogical approaches to political disclosure. For example, current literature highlights committed impartiality, a pedagogical approach to political disclosure in which teachers openly disclose their political views while sharing and inviting differing opinions [8]. Various researchers have found short-term benefits of this approach on students, including nuanced political understanding, enhanced critical thinking skills, and healthy debate [9,10]. However, a gap exists in understanding its long-term impact on students beyond immediate classroom interactions.

Although existing research offers valuable insights into the short-term benefits of committed impartiality, a gap exists in understanding its long-term impact on individuals' engagement with "little p" and "Big P" politics. Specifically, there is a limited exploration of how this pedagogical approach shapes individuals' involvement in community-based activism and participation in national politics and elections. This study aims to bridge this gap, assessing the extent to which teachers sharing their political beliefs while maintaining a commitment to impartiality impacts students' political engagement.

This study employs a linear regression model to examine the statistical significance of committed impartiality pedagogy on students' political engagement. Using a Likert scale survey adapted from Kahne and Campbell, the research explores the relationship between committed impartiality and both "little p" and "Big P" political engagement. Statistical analyses, including two linear regression models, were conducted using Microsoft Excel to assess the strength and significance of these relationships [3,6].

Through this, the research aims to contribute insights into the impact of committed impartiality pedagogy on students' political engagement, shedding light on its potential role in shaping informed and engaged citizens beyond the confines of

the classroom.

2. Literature Review

In recent years, there has been an increase in literature exploring the short-term benefits of committed impartiality (CI) pedagogy in the classroom, revealing that it fosters nuanced political understanding and critical thinking. However, a gap exists in understanding the long-term effects of CI beyond immediate classroom interactions, with current long-term research limited to neutral impartiality's impact on engagement with "little p" and "Big P" politics. As such, the study aims to bridge this gap by exploring the long-term impact of committed impartiality.

2.1 Pedagogical Approaches to Political Disclosure

Prior research has explored various pedagogical approaches to political disclosure that educators may adopt. Firstly, exclusive neutrality (EN) refers to teachers refusing to engage in political discussions and openly disclosing their political views, thus maintaining political neutrality [11]. However, this approach has been characterized by Geller as impractical because teachers often unintentionally convey political messages in their classrooms through commentary, resources, and how they frame their questions without necessarily meaning to. Secondly, exclusive partiality (EP) involves pushing students toward a specific political position by promoting a single political ideology and limiting the expression of opposing ideologies [2,12]. This approach has been characterized as severely harmful as it could be weaponized by teachers and used as a form of indoctrination, where teachers may attempt to force their political agenda upon their students [11]. It may place students in an "echo chamber," where ideologies and values that contrast with the teachers are alienated, perpetuating a narrow and incomplete understanding of political issues and current events [12].

Thirdly, neutral impartiality (NI) is a pedagogical approach that encourages multi-opinionated discussion among students while the teacher refrains from disclosing personal opinion [13]. Journell discovered a drawback to this approach: Teachers might hesitate to critique or comment on certain perspectives because they're striving for neutrality, which may lead them to refrain from commenting when students express misleading or misinformed political ideologies [11].

Pedagogical Approach	Description
Exclusive Neutrality (EN)	Teachers refuse to engage in political discussions and openly disclose their political views (Geller, 2020).
Exclusive Partiality (EP)	Teachers push students toward a specific political position by promoting a single political ideology and limiting the expression of opposing ideologies (Kahne & Sporte, 2008).
Neutral Impartiality (NI)	Teachers encourage multi-opinionated political discussions among students, but the teacher still refrains from disclosing personal opinions (Liebertz, 2022)

Table 1: Pedagogical Approaches and Descriptions

To summarize, existing literature on teachers' pedagogical approaches to political disclosure reveals three primary strategies: exclusive neutrality, where teachers avoid political discussions but inadvertently convey bias; exclusive partiality,

which risks indoctrination; and neutral impartiality, which, while promoting critical discussions, may allow misinformed ideologies to spread. A common problem among each approach is the potential for unintended consequences, as teachers may

struggle to maintain the desired balance between their views and foster open and unbiased discussions.

2.2 Committed Impartiality Pedagogy

Due to the challenges associated with the aforementioned pedagogical strategies, researchers have begun exploring alternative pedagogical practices—namely, committed impartiality (CI). Committed impartiality entails teachers openly disclosing their personal views while modeling appropriate civic behaviors and attitude [11]. This approach fosters an open and active community within the classroom, encouraging diverse perspectives to voice their opinions on various issues [14]. Liebertz concludes that teachers sharing their political views while maintaining a commitment to impartiality creates a positive learning environment as teachers are open about their opinions and ensure that all perspectives among their students are represented [13]. Together, existing literature suggests that teachers sharing their political beliefs while maintaining a commitment to impartiality allows diverse perspectives to be represented and appropriate civic behaviors to be upheld.

2.3 Impact of Committed Impartiality Pedagogy Within the Classroom

Further research has expanded on the notions Lo and Liebertz brought forth, exploring the direct benefits of CI on students [13,14]. Hess and Gatti conducted a study comprising interviews with students enrolled in a classroom where the teacher disclosed their political beliefs through CI, finding that this approach facilitated a more nuanced and comprehensive understanding of political issues among students. Similarly, Miller-Lane's (2006) ethnographic research paper—in which she immersed herself in various high school social studies courses—found that students with teachers disclosing political beliefs through CI have greater critical thinking skills and civic awareness than those who did not have teachers embracing this approach [9]. Likewise, Thornberg and Elvstrand's study suggests that teachers disclosing their beliefs through CI can influence students to express opposing views and, thus, promote healthy debate, open-mindedness, and a greater willingness to listen to those with different political views and ideologies [10]. Collectively, these studies show that the CI approach provides a range of benefits among students, which include fostering a more nuanced understanding of political issues, enhancing critical thinking skills and civic awareness, and encouraging healthy debate and open-mindedness. However, these studies pertain to the short-term effects through immediate classroom interactions and discussions, in which all three studies looked at students actively enrolled in classes with teachers practicing CI. This warrants further research exploring the effects CI has on students beyond the context of a classroom environment.

2.4 Impact of Political Disclosure Pedagogical Practices Outside the Classroom

While existing literature extensively explores the short-term influence of teachers disclosing their beliefs through CI on students, a gap exists in understanding the long-term effects of CI beyond immediate classroom interactions, with current long-term research limited to neutral impartiality—a practice in

which teachers encourage discussion but refrain from disclosing their personal beliefs—and its impact on student engagement with “little p” and “Big p” politics [6].

For example, Campbell found that neutral impartiality (NI) increases a student's likelihood of becoming an informed voter later, suggesting that NI helps foster feelings of civic responsibility and engagement [3]. Similarly, Kahne investigated how teachers embracing neutral impartiality impacts student engagement with “little p” politics—participating in expressive and youth-centered action—and engagement with “Big P” politics—expressing interest in politics, interest in diverse perspectives, and a desire to vote and participate in elections and campaigns [6]. Through his research, Kahne found that neutral impartiality positively correlated with student engagement with community-based service work and elections. In essence, when teachers practice NI in their classes, student political engagement with “little p” and “Big P” politics is enhanced [6].

While Campbell and Kahne explore political disclosure pedagogical practices and their long-term impact beyond the classroom, their research is limited to neutral impartiality, in which teachers encourage open discussions of political issues among their students but still refrain from sharing their political beliefs [3,6]. This warrants further research exploring the long-term impact of other pedagogical approaches and how such approaches may impact students' political engagement.

2.5 Situated Gap

To summarize, existing literature has amply explored the short-term benefits of CI pedagogy in the context of a classroom environment, indicating that it fosters nuanced political understanding, improved critical thinking skills, and great open-mindedness; however, a gap exists in understanding the long-term effects of CI pedagogy beyond immediate classroom interactions, with current long-term research limited to neutral impartiality's impact on students' engagement with “little p” and “Big P” politics. As such, this study aims to bridge this gap by investigating the long-term impact of committed impartiality, exploring how the CI pedagogical approach impacts students' engagement with both “little p” and “Big P” politics.

3. Method

3.1 Research Question & Hypothesis

This method intends to address the following question: Through a linear regression analysis, to what extent does the practice of secondary education teachers openly sharing their political beliefs in the classroom while maintaining a commitment to impartiality affect students' political engagement? To answer this research question, the hypothesis posed was a statistically significant and positive correlation between students who experienced CI pedagogy from teachers and their engagement with “little p” and “Big P” politics. This positive correlation may arise from the notions brought forth by existing literature, such as Campbell and Kahne who argue that neutral impartiality, a pedagogical approach akin to committed impartiality, increases student engagement with “little p” and “Big P” politics [3,6]. Additionally, short-term benefits show that CI helps increase

students' political awareness and civic consciousness, likely making them more interested in and engaged with politics in the long term [9].

3.2 Research Design

The research design aims to analyze the strength and statistical significance between two variables—committed impartiality exhibited by teachers and levels of political engagement among students. By employing linear regression models, this study analyzes the relationship between the two variables by fitting a straight line to the observed data points, providing a quantitative measure of the association between the variables [15]. In statistical analysis, regression is used to identify the associations between variables occurring in some data; it can show the degree of an association and the statistical significance of that association [15].

This research employs a correlational approach, in which the study will focus on identifying relationships' associations rather than making causation claims [15]. This distinction is based on the notion that CI, while an influential factor, is unlikely to be the sole determinant of how politically engaged someone is, as there are a variety of agents of socialization that influence one's political behaviors and engagement [3].

Kahne's research serves as this study's seminal source as this study heavily relies on his methodology [6]. Kahne's research employs regression analyses to explore the correlation between neutral impartiality and engagement with both "little p" and "Big P" politics among students [6]. Utilizing linear regression models, Kahne sought to determine the strength and association between these variables, thereby addressing the central inquiry of his study[6]. Similarly, this study employs regression analyses to investigate the relationship between committed impartiality pedagogy and engagement with "little p" and "Big P" politics among students.

The study initially administered an online Likert Scale questionnaire (n=20) to conduct the regression models, structured into three categories listed below in Table 2. Each category comprised five to seven questions, and two examples of questions within each category are listed in Table 2. Participants were instructed to complete the Likert Scale survey, with response options ranging from 1 to 4. For each category, numerical responses represented different levels of agreement or frequency, as seen in Table 2. All questions listed in Table 2 were adapted from Kahne and Campbell, and the remaining questions used in this study can be found in Appendix A [3,6].

Category & Response Options	Description
Committed Impartiality exhibited by teachers: <i>Response categories were (1) "never, (2) "sometimes," (3) "often," and (4) "very often."</i>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. In one or more of my classes, we discussed political and social topics where students expressed different opinions. 2. Teachers present several sides of an issue when explaining it in class.
Engagement with "little p" politics: <i>Response categories were (1) "never, (2) "a few times," and (3) "once a month," (4) "more than once a month."</i>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. I have volunteered in my community (e.g., by tutoring, mentoring, doing environmental work, working with the elderly, etc.). 2. I've worked on a community service project in school.
Engagement with "Big P" Politics: <i>Response categories were (1) "strongly disagree, (2) "slightly disagree," (3) "slightly agree," and (4) "strongly agree."</i>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Once I am old enough, I expect to vote in every election. 2. Being concerned with national, state, and local issues is an important responsibility for everybody.

Table 2: Categories of Likert Scale Survey and Examples of Questions from Each Category

3.3 Cohort Selection & Controlled Variables

The cohort selection process for this study involved identifying high school students at an international American school in Singapore who hold American citizenship. This decision was influenced by Kahne and Campbell, who posed questions in their studies related to voting specific to US citizens; individuals from other nationalities might encounter difficulty responding due to variations in voting laws and regulations across different countries. [3,6]

The study incorporates control variables such as the participants' school affiliation, grade level (11-12), and age (16-18). While ethnic background was not controlled for, citizenship status was strictly controlled, ensuring that all participants were American

citizens. These four variables were selected for control as including a greater number of control variables enhances the accuracy of the study's findings [16].

3.4 Independent & Dependent Variables

The independent variable in this study examines the extent of committed impartiality pedagogy experienced by students. Drawing from Kahne's research, the study incorporates two dependent variables: students' engagement with "little p" and "Big P" politics. To analyze the relationship between one independent variable and two dependent variables, two regression models were performed—one comparing CI pedagogy with "little p" politics and the other with "Big P" politics [6].

Recognizing the differences between Kahne’s study and this current research—exploring neutral impartiality while this study investigates CI pedagogy—adjustments were made to questions regarding classroom discussion of societal issues [6]. To address these differences, additional questions were introduced: first, gauging the extent to which teachers express their viewpoints when discussing an issue in class, and second, assessing the extent to which teachers present multiple perspectives on an issue during class discussions [3]. These supplementary questions, drawn from Campbell’s research, accommodate the differences in question focus between Kahne’s research and this study [3,6].

4. Procedure & Data Collection

As participants were all minors, they were required to complete a consent form signed by themselves and their parent/guardian. Participants completed the Likert scale survey, which included questions about their high school classroom experiences and their experiences with political engagement, both “little p” and “big p” (Appendix A).

4.1 Statistical Analysis

Following the participants' completion of the Likert scale questionnaire, two regression analyses were conducted using Microsoft Excel. To perform regression analysis, the Likert scale responses for each participant in each category were first averaged, resulting in a single output value representing the mean of all Likert scale responses within each category [6,17].

Subsequently, the averaged values were utilized to conduct the regression models. Firstly, the average Likert scale scores for each participant’s CI pedagogy levels were compared with their engagement with “little p” politics for the first regression model. Similarly, for the second regression model, the mean scores of CI pedagogy were compared with engagement in “Big P” politics. The regression analysis tool in Microsoft Excel was employed to calculate the values, automatically generating regression statistics including Multiple R and R-squared values [15]. These

statistical measures assessed the strength and direction of the linear relationship between the independent and dependent variables [15].

Excel's regression statistics help determine the strength of the correlation between the two variables, as indicated by the Multiple R Coefficient. Additionally, the statistical significance of the regression model was determined through the p-value with a significance level of 0.05 [17]. A p-value greater than 0.05 suggests a relationship that is not statistically significant, whereas a p-value less than 0.05 indicates a statistically significant relationship [17].

This methodological approach, modeled after Kahne and Campbell, evaluated the strength of the relationship through regression coefficients (Multiple R) and determined its statistical significance through its p-value [3,6]. Thus, this study determined the strength of the correlation and significance of CI pedagogy on student political engagement.

4.2 Limitations of Methodology

Two notable limitations within this methodology are the relatively small sample size of twenty participants (n=20) and the limited scope of control variables, which currently include only age, school, grade, and citizenship. A larger sample size would enhance the accuracy of the findings while incorporating additional control variables, such as socioeconomic status or prior political involvement, which could provide a more comprehensive understanding of the relationship between CI pedagogy and political engagement among students [17].

5. Results

In this study, twenty students (n=20) from an American international school in Singapore participated. Following the completion of the survey by each participant, two regression analyses were conducted. Results from the regression analyses are displayed in Table 3.

	“Little p” Politics <i>Expressive & Youth Centered Action; Voluntary Activity</i>	“Big P” Politics <i>Interest in Politics; Interest in Diverse Perspectives; Intent to Vote</i>
Committed Impartiality <i>Open discussion of societal issues; Disclosure of beliefs; Promotion of debate.</i>	0.518** (0.03)	0.488* (0.07)

Note. Unstandardized Multiple R coefficients are reported. Standard errors are in parentheses.

*p≤0.05, **p≤0.01

Table 3: Impact of Committed Impartiality on Engagement with “little p” and “Big P” Politics

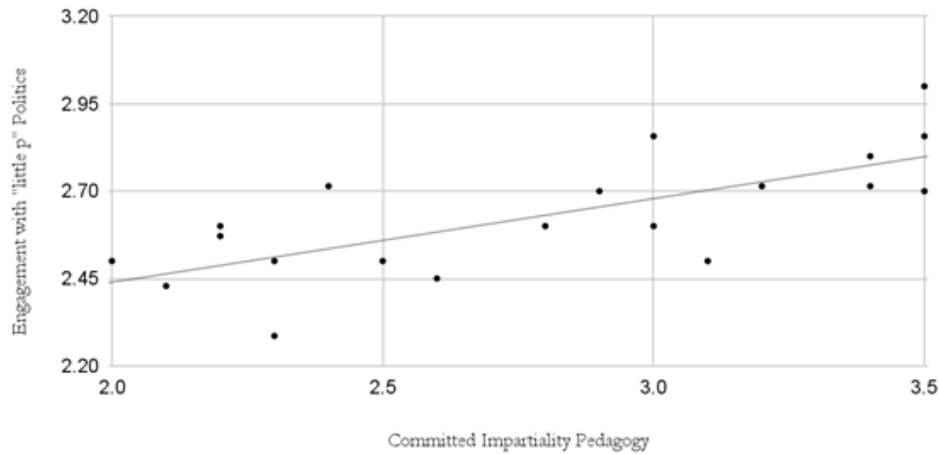


Figure 1: Graph Comparing Committed Impartiality Pedagogy vs Student Engagement with “little p” Politics

The first analysis compared committed impartiality (CI) pedagogy with "little p" politics, revealing a moderate positive relationship with a multiple r coefficient of 0.518 (Table 3). Figure 1 depicts a comparative graph between two variables: the mean score for each participant's experience with CI pedagogy versus their mean score for involvement in 'little p' politics. A line of best fit is drawn across the data points to highlight the nature of the correlation. Moreover, the regression model indicated statistical significance with a p-value of 0.0088 ($p < 0.01$), highlighting a strong association between CI pedagogy

and "little p" political engagement. The coefficient of 0.518 suggests that, on average, a one-unit increase in CI corresponds to a 0.518-unit increase in student engagement with "little p" politics (Figure 1). Given a moderately high Multiple R-value and a p-value less than 0.01 ($p < 0.01$), it can be deduced that there is a moderately positive and statistically significant correlation between teachers disclosing their political beliefs while maintaining a commitment to impartiality and engagement with “little p” politics among students.

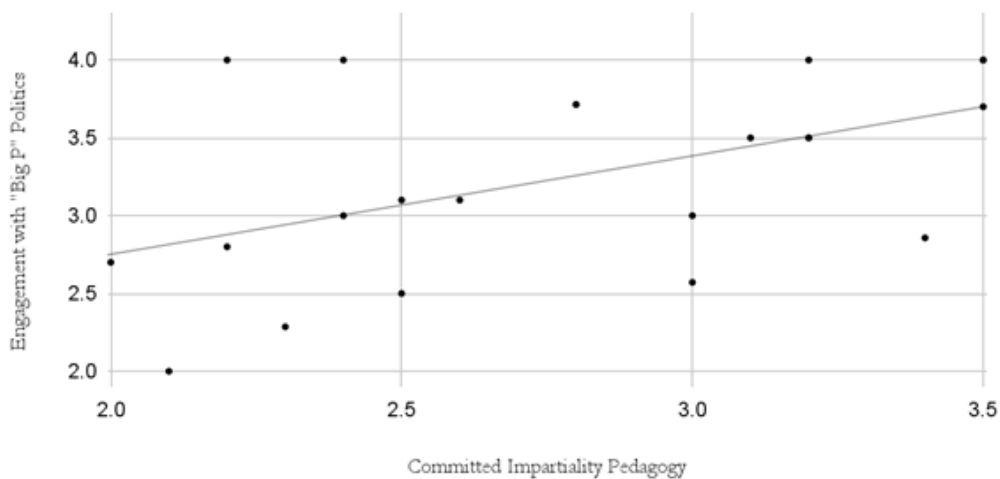


Figure 2: Graph Comparing Committed Impartiality Pedagogy vs Student Engagement with “Big P” Politics

In the second analysis, which compared CI with "Big P" Politics, a moderate positive relationship was also observed with a multiple correlation coefficient (Multiple R) of 0.488 (Table 3). Figure 1 depicts a comparative graph between two variables: the mean score for each participant's experience with CI pedagogy versus their mean score for involvement with “Big P” politics. A line of best fit is drawn across the data points to highlight the nature of the correlation. The regression model indicated statistical significance, with a p-value of 0.046 ($p < 0.05$), thus highlighting a notable association between CI pedagogy and

student engagement with "Big P" politics. The coefficient of 0.488 suggests that, on average, a one-unit increase in CI corresponds to a 0.488-unit increase in "Big P" political engagement (Figure 2). With a moderately high Multiple R-value and a statistically significant relationship ($p < 0.05$), this means that teachers disclosing their political beliefs through CI strongly correlates with students' engagement with “Big P” politics.

To summarize, the linear regression analysis revealed a statistically significant ($p < 0.01$) moderately positive correlation

between committed impartiality (CI) pedagogy and engagement with "little p" politics among students, as well as a statistically significant relationship ($p < 0.05$) found between CI pedagogy and engagement with "Big P" politics. This means that students who have teachers disclosing their political beliefs while maintaining a commitment to impartiality are more likely to engage in community-based volunteering and service work and with political issues and elections. This indicates that the study's findings confirm the study's initial hypothesis, which proposed a statistically significant and moderately positive relationship between civic intelligence (CI) and engagement with both 'little p' and 'Big P' politics.

6. Discussion

To reiterate, the linear regression model revealed a statistically significant moderately positive correlation between CI and engagement with "little p" politics among students ($p < 0.01$), suggesting that students who experience CI are more likely to engage in expressive and youth-centered action, which includes community-based volunteering and service learning. This contrasts existing literature, namely Kahne, who found that neutral impartiality has no impact on engagement with "little p" politics, including voluntary activity or expressive and youth-centered action [6]. These results may arise from the differing pedagogical approaches to teacher political disclosure—specifically, while Kahne explored neutral impartiality, this study explored committed impartiality [6]. Collectively, this study and Kahne's outcomes suggest that committed impartiality may be more effective than neutral impartiality in promoting engagement with "little p" politics among students [6].

The linear regression model also revealed a statistically significant moderately positive correlation between CI and engagement with "Big P" politics among students ($p < 0.05$), suggesting that students who experience CI are more likely to be engaged with political issues and elections. This aligns with existing literature, namely, the results presented by Kahne, who found that neutral impartiality significantly impacts student engagement with "Big P" Politics [6]. This study's findings also align with Campbell's study, where he found that neutral impartiality increases young people's likelihood of becoming informed voters, suggesting that NI helps foster feelings of civic responsibility and engagement [3]. Together, the outcomes of this study, Kahne's, and Campbell's suggest that teachers disclosing their political beliefs while maintaining CI or NI both correlate strongly with student engagement with "Big P" politics, suggesting that both pedagogical approaches have a comparable impact on engagement with national elections and campaigns [3,6].

The findings of this study also align with existing literature that explores the short-term benefits of CI pedagogy. For instance, Hess and Gatti found that this teaching approach allowed students to gain a more nuanced and comprehensive understanding of political issues [9]. This may impact their engagement with political issues and elections ("Big P" politics) because students would be more greatly aware of existing political issues and current events [9]. Because this study's findings reveal a

significant correlation between CI pedagogy and involvement in 'Big P' politics, this correlation is consistent with Hess and Gatti, as it suggests that when students grasp the fundamental dynamics shaping political environments, they are more inclined to engage in various political activities, which includes voting, advocacy, or community organizing [9]. This would, as a result, contribute to students being more engaged with "Big P" politics, as seen in this study's results.

Additional short-term benefits of CI pedagogy were found by Miller-Lane, finding that students with teachers practicing CI have greater critical thinking skills and civic awareness than students without teachers exhibiting CI. This finding suggests that an educational environment where teachers exhibit CI pedagogy helps students improve their ability to analyze complex issues critically and foster a deeper understanding of civic responsibilities and societal structures. Therefore, the findings in this study align with Miller-Lane because heightened cognitive abilities and civic consciousness would contribute to greater engagement with "little p" and "Big P" politics as they help lay the foundation for informed and active citizenship. Students equipped with these skills found in Miller-Lane's study would be better equipped to navigate the complexities of political discourse, which may contribute to increased engagement with "little p" and "Big P" politics.

Similarly, Thornberg and Elvstrand's study suggests that CI can encourage students to express opposing views and, thus, promote healthy debate and open-mindedness [10]. By fostering an atmosphere of respectful debate and dialogue, CI equips students with the communication skills necessary to engage with political issues at various levels [10]. Therefore, the findings presented in this study align with Thornberg and Elvstrand since students learn to articulate their viewpoints effectively and engage with alternative perspectives constructively through CI pedagogy, which would, in turn, contribute to greater participation in "Big P" politics [10].

To conclude, the findings presented in this study revealed a statistically significant relationship between CI pedagogy and student engagement with "little p" and "Big P" politics, aligning with and diverging from prior research. These findings hold significance because they add to the increasing body of literature favoring teacher political disclosure in secondary education settings, albeit under the framework of committed impartiality. The research also contributes insights into the impact of CI on students' political engagement, shedding light on its potential role in shaping informed and engaged citizens beyond the confines of the classroom.

7. Conclusion

7.1 Limitations

Although the results revealed a statistically significant relationship between CI and engagement with "little p" politics and "Big P" politics, limitations still prevent a definitive conclusion from being drawn.

Firstly, the Likert scale questionnaire administered to participants

was completed by American citizens who are international students residing in Singapore. Their distance from the United States may have influenced their levels of engagement with politics, both on a smaller scale and within the broader context of national politics. Moreover, the prevalence and implementation of CI pedagogy may vary depending on the country of residence. As a result, including participants living in the United States could have potentially altered the outcomes. Therefore, while the study revealed a statistically significant relationship between CI and engagement with “little p” and “Big P” politics, because participants were limited to international American students in Singapore, this correlation is limited to this particular cohort and can’t be generalized to other countries.

Secondly, as the scope of this study’s cohort is limited to individuals from higher socioeconomic statuses, its results cannot be generalized across individuals from families with varying socioeconomic statuses. Additionally, as political ideology was not accounted for as a variable, it remains uncertain whether the observed relationship applies to individuals with varying political leanings. This is significant because socioeconomic status and political beliefs can influence civic consciousness and political awareness. Therefore, given the study’s focus on individuals with high socioeconomic statuses and its failure to account for political ideology, the conclusions drawn may not extend to diverse populations with varying socioeconomic backgrounds and political perspectives.

7.2 Implications

Despite the study’s limitations, its findings have significant implications for American educators in Singapore and American international students in Singapore. The statistically significant relationship between CI pedagogy and student engagement with “little p” and “Big P” politics suggests that educators may benefit from incorporating this approach into their teaching methodologies. However, these implications are tailored to the specific cohort under study—American international students and educators residing in Singapore.

Adopting CI pedagogy could enable educators within this study’s cohort to share their political beliefs openly. By fostering an environment where political discussions are encouraged and valued, American educators in Singapore can cultivate a culture of civic consciousness and informed citizenship among their students.

This increased engagement is particularly critical considering the historically lower voter turnout among younger demographics in recent elections. By deepening students’ understanding of political processes and issues, American educators in Singapore can help bridge the generational gap in political participation, working towards a more inclusive and participatory society.

As students within the scope of this study’s cohort may become more deeply involved in politics and develop into informed citizens, the stigma surrounding political discussions in education may diminish, paving the way for more open and honest discourse within and beyond the classroom. Ultimately,

by instilling a sense of civic responsibility and political efficacy in younger generations, American educators in Singapore may be able to help contribute to the cultivation of an informed and engaged citizenry among American students, even from abroad.

7.3 Future Research

While the study’s findings found a statistically significant relationship between CI pedagogy and student political engagement, there still are avenues for future researchers to explore. Firstly, further research could determine the generalizability of these findings to educators and students residing in the US. If validated, these implications could hold relevance for fostering civic engagement and strengthening democracy within American educational settings nationwide. Furthermore, future studies could examine whether this relationship persists among individuals with varying socioeconomic backgrounds and political ideologies, thereby assessing its broader applicability beyond the confines of this study’s cohort.

Secondly, it may be valuable to explore how student political engagement is impacted when their political views align with those of their teacher versus when they differ or even oppose them. This research would further explore the impact of teacher political disclosure on student political engagement, exploring whether divergent political ideologies between teachers and students enhance or hinder political engagement.

Additionally, further research may compare the impact of different pedagogical approaches to political disclosure—such as exclusive partiality and exclusive neutrality—on student political engagement. Through exploring the outcomes associated with each pedagogical approach, researchers can help shed light on the most effective pedagogical strategies for fostering political awareness and engagement among students, helping to inform best practices for educators.

Finally, because this study pertains to secondary school students, future research may explore this relationship in higher education. Future research could help identify differences in the relationship between these variables in tertiary and secondary education.

7.4 Concluding Remarks

To conclude, this study’s findings contribute significantly to the growing body of literature supporting the idea that secondary education teachers should be free to disclose their political views to students while upholding a commitment to impartiality. These findings suggest a potential shift away from the traditional separation of politics and education; with continued research, educators who embrace political disclosure through CI in the classroom may see greater political engagement in their students.

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Appendix A

All questions on this Likert scale questionnaire are adapted from Kahne (2013) and Campbell (2008).

Civic Learning Opportunities

[Response categories were (1) "never, (2) "sometimes," (3) "often," and (4) "very often."]

Classroom Discussion of Societal Issues

The following questions refer to your experiences in high school.

- In one or more of my classes, we discussed political and social topics where students expressed different opinions.
- In our classes, teachers encouraged students to make up their own minds about political and social topics.
- In our classes, we learned about problems in our society and what causes them.
- In our classes, we talked about/shared our perspectives on current events.
- In our classes, we learned information about and/or researched current issues in the community or broader society.
- Teachers encourage students to discuss political and social topics in which people have opinions.
- Teachers encourage students to make up their own minds about political and social topics.
- Teachers share their side of an issue when explaining it in class.
- Teachers present several sides of an issue when explaining it in class.

Engagement with "Little p" Politics

[Response categories were (1) "never, (2) "a few times," and (3) "once a month," (4) "more than once a month."]

The following questions refer to your experiences in high school.

Service Learning Opportunities

- I've worked on a community service project in school.
- I've worked on a service learning project to improve my community.

Expressive and Youth-Centered Action

- I have participated in a poetry slam, youth forum, musical performance, and other events where young people express their political views.
- I have taken part in a peaceful protest, march, or demonstration.
- I have worked to change a school policy or school rules.

Voluntary Activity

- I have volunteered in my community (e.g., by tutoring, mentoring, doing environmental work, working with the elderly, etc.).
- I have done something to help raise money for a charitable cause (e.g. participate in a walk/run/ride, bake sale, etc.).

Engagement with “Big P” Politics

[Response categories were (1) “strongly disagree, (2) “slightly disagree,” (3) “slightly agree,” and (4) “strongly agree.”]

- I am interested in political issues.
- Once I am 18, I expect I will vote regularly.
- Once I am old enough, I expect to vote in every election.
- Being actively involved in state and local issues is my responsibility.
- Being concerned with national, state, and local issues is an important responsibility for everybody.
- Everyone should be involved in working with community organizations and local governments on issues that affect the community.
- I think it is important to get involved in improving the community.

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