

# The Trajectory of Public Attitudes Toward Immigrants in the United States: Latent Growth Analysis Approach

---

Sunwoo Lee *Korea National Council on Social Welfare*

**ABSTRACT** *Objective:* Public attitudes toward immigrants influence their adaptation to new circumstances. This study examines public attitudes toward immigrants in the United States to identify the patterns of attitude change from 1996 to 2014; the relationship between individuals' income and the trajectory of attitudes toward immigrants is investigated as well. *Method:* I conducted a latent growth model using the General Social Survey data sets (1996, 2004, and 2014), which included a module on immigration. The total sample size was 3,639. All participants were U.S. citizens. *Results:* General attitudes toward immigrants have significantly worsened from 1996 to 2014 (intercept = 2.510, slope =  $-.025$ ,  $p < .001$ ). Respondents' annual household income influenced the trajectory of attitudes toward immigrants ( $\beta = .002$ ,  $SE = .001$ ,  $p = .006$ ), with poorer households having more negative attitudes toward immigrants. *Conclusions:* Study findings warn of growing anti-immigrant sentiments. Further investigation is needed to correct negative stereotypes and misconceptions about the harm caused by immigration to the U.S. economy and welfare of the population.

**KEYWORDS:** attitudes toward immigrants, anti-immigrant sentiments, immigration, theory of prejudice, latent growth modeling

doi: 10.1086/713998

One year after the Civil Rights Act passed, the Immigration Act of 1965 abolished the discriminatory quotas based on race or national origin previously used to deny immigration by some groups to the United States (Ewing, 2012). Since then, immigration to the United States has undergone dramatic changes in volume, origins, and geographic distribution. As of 1960, the foreign-born population represented about 5% of U.S. residents and was comprised mostly of individuals from European countries (Batalova et al., 2020; Grieco et al., 2012). By 2017, the foreign-born population was estimated to account for 13.7% of U.S. residents and consisted mostly of people from Latin American and Asian countries (Migration Policy

Institute, 2019). Previous studies have identified U.S. immigrants' economic difficulties—such as their low-income status, unfair wages, and discrimination in the labor market (Chung, 2011; Hanna & Ortega, 2016; Parra-Cardona et al., 2006)—and isolation from social supports, such as deprivation of eligibility for most social programs and limited social networks (Crea et al., 2018; Esses et al., 2002; Gray et al., 2015; Harris, 2006; Roth, 2017).

Immigration to the United States was not numerically restricted or regulated before the Page Act was passed in 1875—the first federal act to exclude criminals, prostitutes, and Chinese contract laborers. Since then, the United States has continued to favor restricting immigration, either by allocating qualitative limits on the types of immigrants allowed to enter the country or imposing quantitative ceilings on their numbers (Simon & Alexander, 1993; Simon & Lynch 1999). Since the 1996 switch from Aid to Families with Dependent Children to Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act, 1996) and passage of the Illegal Immigration Reform and Immigrant Responsibility Act (1996), increased enforcement of immigration laws has erected barriers—such as incorporating legal permanent resident status and applying green card eligibility—for immigrants seeking to meet eligibility for social services. Particularly after the terrorist attacks on September 11, 2001, attitudes toward immigrants became substantially more negative, and the U.S. federal government drastically narrowed immigrant eligibility criteria for public benefits (Branton et al., 2011; Esses et al., 2002). At the same time, national security became a top priority for law enforcement (Harris, 2006). For example, the National Security Entry-Exit Registration System and a “voluntary interview” program that singled out foreign-born Muslims, Arabs, and South Asians were implemented in 2002 (Ewing, 2012). Moreover, since the 2016 presidential election, U.S. immigration policy has undergone a series of changes, including the proposal or implementation of policies such as building a wall on the U.S.–Mexico border, decreasing legal immigration, deporting unauthorized immigrants, and prohibiting admission of refugees from some Muslim-majority countries (Pierce & Selee, 2017; Pierce et al., 2018).

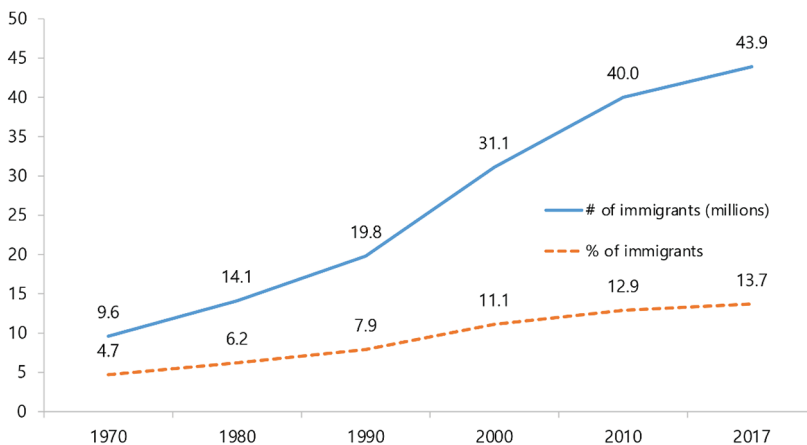
Public attitudes toward immigrants have been investigated in many immigration policy studies and linked with specific policy outcomes (Arango, 2016; Batalova et al., 2017; Hero & Preuhs 2007; Saran, 2009). Esses et al. (2002) provided three fundamental reasons why public attitudes toward immigrants are important. First, public attitudes strongly influence public policy, such as immigration legislation (Esses et al., 2002). Governments and politicians pay attention to public opinion and reflect these attitudes in new legislation or revision of existing laws. Second, public attitudes toward immigrants influence individual behavior, which may in turn influence the adaptation of immigrants and the overall social climate in the host society (Esses et al., 2002). Favorable attitudes toward immigrants are likely to give rise to fair and unprejudiced treatment of immigrants, whereas negative attitudes

are more likely to result in discrimination (Dovidio et al., 1996; Esses et al., 2002). Third, Esses et al. (2002) explained that public attitudes toward immigrants are crucial to establish “the collective vision of national identity” and “the perception of who is (and who is not) considered a member of the national ingroup” (p. 71).

### Blumer’s Theory of Prejudice

Public attitudes toward immigrants have been examined as one of the crucial factors influencing immigrants’ adaptation to new circumstances (Malti et al., 2012; Williams, 2016). However, corresponding to the increase of the immigrant population, anti-immigrant sentiments also have been growing in the United States (Flores, 2018). According to Blumer’s (1958) theory of prejudice, the larger the number of an out-group (e.g., immigrants), the stronger the feeling of threat perceived by the in-group (e.g., nonimmigrants; Blalock, 1967; Bobo, 1983; Taylor, 1998; Taylor & Mateyka, 2011). The sense of threat can be intensified when in-group members feel intimidated by an out-group, regardless of whether the threat affects them (Blumer, 1958; Fussell, 2014). Simply put, it is the perception of the threat that matters. Earlier research by Blalock (1967) explained that the sense of threat perceived by in-group members may be diffused as the size of an out-group grows. This threat hypothesis has been empirically examined and confirmed in several studies (Bobo, 1983; Bobo & Zubrinsky, 1996; Giles & Evans, 1986; Fossett & Kiecolt, 1989; Quillian, 1996; Taylor, 1998; Taylor & Mateyka, 2011). The immigrant population in the United States has rapidly expanded to almost 44 million since the 1990s (Radford, 2019; see Figure 1). Thus, based on Blumer’s (1958) prejudice theory, it is expected that anti-immigrant sentiments have intensified alongside growth of the immigrant population.

**Figure 1.** Immigrant Population in the United States, 1970–2017



Note. Data source: Radford (2019).

In addition, Fussell (2014) explained that the threat consolidates in-group members' sense of entitlement to rights, their elevated status, and their alienation from the out-group. Previous studies identified that in-group members were most often concerned with economic threats from immigrants (Hainmueller & Hopkins, 2015; Mayda, 2006; Scheve & Slaughter, 2001). Likewise, U.S. citizens perceived immigrants as competitors for scarce jobs and feared that the immigrant population increase would cause lower wages and undermine the negotiating position of U.S.-born workers (Bonacich, 1972; Borjas, 1987; Card, 1990; Mayda, 2006; Scheve & Slaughter, 2001). Recently, Czaika (2015) and Yu (2019) found that more low-income people in the United States believed that large numbers of immigrants would threaten their job prospects and general welfare. Informed by Blumer's theory of prejudice (1958), the current study investigated the trajectory of public attitudes toward U.S. immigrants and examined how individuals' income level affected that trajectory.

### **Immigrants in the United States**

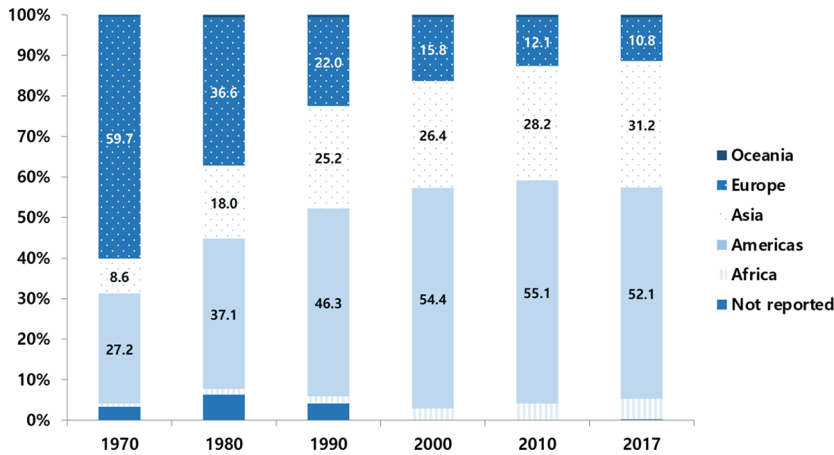
According to the Migration Policy Institute (2019), the immigrant population in the United States expanded from 9.6 million in 1970 to 43.9 million by 2017 (see Figure 1). Based on Census data, the Pew Research Center estimated that 45% of immigrants (20.7 million) were naturalized citizens, 27% of immigrants (12.3 million) were permanent residents, and 5% of immigrants (2.2 million) were temporary residents as of 2017 (Radford, 2019). In 2017, almost a quarter of total immigrants (10.5 million, 23%) were unauthorized immigrants, comprising 3.2% of the entire U.S. population (Radford, 2019).

Immigrants from other American and Asian nations began to immigrate to the United States in large numbers in the late 20th and early 21st centuries; in contrast, by the 1970s most immigrants were from European countries (see Figure 2). As shown in Figure 2, the number of Asian immigrants in the United States has continuously increased since 1970. In 2017, most immigrants to the United States hailed from Mexico (11.2 million), followed by China (2.9 million), India (2.6 million), and the Philippines (2 million; Migration Policy Institute, 2019; Radford, 2019). Immigration from Latin American countries slightly slowed after the Great Recession, particularly for Mexico, which has experienced a reduced flow of immigrants into the United States and an increasing return of immigrants to Mexico (Migration Policy Institute, 2019; Radford, 2019).

### **Public Attitudes Toward Immigrants**

Some scholars have addressed attitudes toward *immigrants* and attitudes toward *immigration* as synonymous concepts (Esses et al., 1998, 2001; Simon & Lynch, 1999), but many other scholars have explained the differences between them (Bauer et al., 2001; Ceobanu & Escandell, 2010; Meuleman et al., 2009; Ward & Masgoret, 2008). Ward

Figure 2. Regions of Birth for Immigrants in the United States, 1970–2017



Note. Data source: Migration Policy Institute (2019).

and Masgoret (2008) asserted that the dynamics of attitudes toward immigrants are different from those of attitudes toward immigration. Meuleman et al. (2009) conceptualized attitudes toward immigrants as *public views* and attitudes toward immigration as *public reactions*. Quillian (2006) also noted that scholars have preferred to investigate attitudes toward immigrants in the vast literature on racial prejudice, rather than investigating immigration per se. As such, this study uses the term *attitudes toward immigrants* and focuses on public attitudes toward immigrants.

Public attitudes toward immigration in the United States became increasingly favorable following the economic recession of the early to mid-1990s and were quite favorable before the terrorist attacks of 9/11 (Essess et al., 2002; Jones, 2001; Moore, 2001). According to a Gallup poll conducted in June 2001 among a representative sample of Americans, 62% of the respondents reported that immigration was “a good thing” for the country; a majority of respondents supported maintaining immigration at the present level (42%) or increasing immigration (14%), and 41% supported reducing immigration (Jones, 2001). However, these attitudes changed dramatically and negatively after the September 11 terrorist attacks (Branton et al., 2011; Essess et al., 2002). According to the American Trends Panel survey conducted by the Pew Research Center in 2015 ( $N = 3,147$ ), 37% of U.S. adults believed that immigrants were making the United States worse off overall, 50% believed that immigrants were negatively affecting the economy, 50% believed that they were exacerbating crime, and 34% believed that immigrants had a deleterious impact on social and moral values (Lopez et al., 2015). Another nationally representative telephone survey ( $N = 2,002$ ) showed that 41% of native-born Americans harbored negative attitudes toward immigrants, including concerns that they were taking away jobs, housing, and health care (Goo, 2015).

Jaret (1999) synthesized findings of previous studies and the results of public opinion polls on immigrants in the United States and theorized that during times of national crisis and economic recession, anti-immigrant sentiments and support for restrictive immigration policies were prevalent. Likewise, Fetzer (2011) analyzed several data sets—including the General Social Survey, World Value Survey, and American National Election Studies data—and found that cultural and economic threats significantly affected public attitudes toward immigrants in the United States. In addition, many studies have focused on immigrant characteristics that could be considered deleterious to the host population, such as limited English proficiency (Adida et al., 2010; Sniderman et al., 2004), closed-minded attitudes (Adida et al., 2010; Brader et al., 2008; Valentino & Iyengar, 2011), low economic status (Harell et al., 2012; Ostfeld, 2017; Sniderman et al., 2004), and low levels of education (Adida et al., 2010; Hainmueller & Hiscox 2010; Harell et al., 2012). Of course, not all immigrants possess such characteristics (Aleksynska & Tritah, 2015; Cortes, 2004), but research findings may contribute to citizens' negative perceptions. Harell et al. (2012) argued that an immigration system that prioritized high-skilled immigrants would effectively combat negative stereotypes and misconceptions about immigrants and that it is necessary to change the way in which the media frame immigrants and immigration issues.

## Method

### Latent Growth Modeling

This secondary data analysis used latent growth modeling (LGM) to examine how U.S. citizens' attitudes toward immigrants have changed and identify the effects of respondents' income level on the trajectory of attitudes. LGM, which is also known as a latent curve model, enables examination of the shape of the mean trend over time and predicts its rate of change (Jung, 2007). As Preacher et al. (2008) stated, LGM is appealing because it can both model change and "allows investigation into the antecedents and consequents of change" (p. 2). Strengths of the LGM approach include its ability to "test the adequacy of the hypothesized growth form," "incorporate both fixed and time-varying covariates," "correct for measurement error in observed indicators," and "incorporate growth on several constructs simultaneously" (Duncan & Duncan, 2009, p. 981). Therefore, using LGM, this study can analyze the trajectory of public attitudes toward immigrants over time, predict the rate of change, and examine measurement model adequacy, which improves the validity of results.

### Sample and Procedures

Data for this study are from the General Social Survey (GSS), which is conducted by the National Opinion Research Center and collects a nationally representative sample

of noninstitutionalized U.S. adults ages 18 and over. The GSS uses a validated multi-stage sampling design focusing on primary sampling units and block-level quotas for households to interview in person. To represent a cross-section of the country, households and an adult member of the household were randomly selected across the United States. This study used GSS data sets for 1996, 2004, and 2014 because they were the only data sets that included a specific module on immigration (National Opinion Research Center, n.d.). The 1996 GSS conducted interviews with a sample of 2,904 individuals (response rate: 76%); 44.2% of respondents ( $n = 1,285$ ) self-reported as U.S. citizens. The 2004 GSS sample included 2,812 individuals (response rate: 70%); 41.5% of respondents ( $n = 1,168$ ) self-reported as U.S. citizens. The 2014 survey had a sample size of 2,538 (response rate: 69.2%); 46.7% of respondents ( $n = 1,186$ ) self-reported as U.S. citizens. The total sample size of this study was 3,639, all of whom reported that they were born in the United States or were naturalized citizens. I conducted power analysis using root-mean-square error of approximation (RMSEA; T. Lee et al., 2012), estimating the necessary sample size for the LGM as 954. This study was approved by the University of Georgia Institutional Review Board.

First, I analyzed sociodemographic data and used Cronbach's alpha to estimate internal consistency; analyses were conducted with SPSS (Version 22). LGM analysis was conducted in Mplus7 (Muthén & Muthén, 2015) using full information maximum likelihood estimation. A latent growth model examined the shape of the mean trend of attitudes toward immigrants over time and predicted its rate of change. The model also identified the effects of respondents' household income on their attitudes' trajectory.

To determine the adequacy of the model, I evaluated model fit using multiple fit indices, including the RMSEA and its 90% confidence interval (CI; Steiger, 1990), the standardized root-mean-square residual (SRMR; Hu & Bentler, 1999), the Tucker-Lewis index (TLI; Bentler & Bonett, 1980), and the comparative fit index (CFI; Bentler, 1990). The thresholds for model fit across these major fit indices have been well established in prior studies and include  $RMSEA \leq .08$ ,  $SRMR \leq .08$ ,  $TLI \geq .90$ , and  $CFI \geq .90$  (Chen, 2007; Hu & Bentler, 1999; Kline, 2011; Raykov, 1998).

## Measures

### *Attitudes Toward Immigrants*

The GSS included several questions related to immigration or immigrants. Among them, five items that were asked in 1996, 2004, and 2014 were used to examine public attitudes toward immigrants. Respondents were asked, "How much do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements?" The statements were as follows:

1. The number of immigrants in America nowadays should be reduced.
2. Immigrants take jobs away from people who were born in America.
3. Immigrants are generally good for America's economy [reverse-coded question].

4. Immigrants increase crime rates.
5. America should take stronger measures to exclude illegal immigrants.

Responses were rated on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 0 (*agree strongly*) to 4 (*disagree strongly*). All five items were combined to create an index score. Higher scores indicated more positive attitudes toward immigrants.

Reliabilities of the measurement and its descriptive statistics are presented in Table 1. As a rule of thumb, many scholars have required reliability of 0.70 or higher, with 0.60 as the lowest acceptable threshold (George & Mallery, 2003; Gliem & Gliem, 2003; Taber, 2018). Morey et al. (2018) found evidence of reasonable reliability coefficients for the 5-item measurement of U.S. citizens' attitudes toward immigrants (Cronbach's  $\alpha = .72$ ). Likewise, in this study sample, reliabilities were acceptable with Cronbach's  $\alpha$  ranging from .746 to .748 among the construct with all three data sets (see Table 1). The mean score of attitudes toward immigrants was 2.520 ( $SE = .023$ ,  $SD = .724$ ) in 1996, 2.314 ( $SE = .024$ ,  $SD = .745$ ) in 2004, and 2.095 ( $SE = .024$ ,  $SD = .743$ ) in 2014 (see Table 1).

### **Household Income**

The GSS surveyed respondents' annual household income in constant dollars and categorized income into eight brackets: less than \$10,000; \$10,000–\$19,999; \$20,000–\$29,999; \$30,000–\$39,999; \$40,000–\$49,999; \$50,000 or more; “Don't know”; and “Prefer not to answer.” Because of its large standard deviation ( $SD = 29,974.654$ ), the variable in constant dollars could not be used for the LGM analysis. Therefore, this study used the categorical variable with eight brackets.

### **Control Variables**

To accurately examine the trajectory of public attitudes and the effect of household income on the trajectory, this study included several control variables: age (in years); race/ethnicity, including white/Caucasian, Black/African American, and other; gender (male = 1, female = 2); and marital status, including married, widowed, divorced, separated, and never married.

**Table 1**  
*Reliabilities and Descriptive Statistics of Respondents' Attitudes Toward Immigrants*

Time Point	Cronbach's $\alpha$	Mean ( $SE$ )	$SD$
Public attitudes (1996)	0.748	2.520 (.023)	0.724
Public attitudes (2004)	0.749	2.314 (.024)	0.745
Public attitudes (2014)	0.746	2.095 (.024)	0.743



## Results

### Sample Characteristics

Sociodemographic characteristics for the three GSS data sets (1996, 2004, and 2014) are shown in Table 2. Respondents for the full sample were ages 18 and over and fell

**Table 2**  
*3-Year Sample Characteristics*

Variable	GSS 1996 (n = 1,285)		GSS 2004 (n = 1,168)		GSS 2014 (n = 1,186)	
	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%
<b>Age (years)</b>						
18–24	124	9.6	108	9.2	81	6.8
25–34	288	22.4	244	20.9	208	17.5
35–44	285	22.2	220	18.8	193	16.3
45–54	249	19.4	241	20.6	217	18.3
55–64	140	10.9	182	15.6	228	19.2
65 and over	195	15.2	172	14.7	253	21.3
Prefer not to answer	4	0.3	1	0.1	6	0.5
<b>Gender</b>						
Male	556	43.3	507	43.4	549	46.3
Female	729	56.7	661	56.6	637	53.7
<b>Race</b>						
White/Caucasian	1,060	82.5	951	81.4	916	77.2
Black/African American	178	13.9	154	13.2	176	14.8
Other	47	3.7	63	5.4	94	7.9
<b>Marital status</b>						
Married	600	46.7	619	53.0	523	44.1
Widowed	127	9.9	80	6.8	101	8.5
Divorced	211	16.4	179	15.3	192	16.2
Separated	54	4.2	40	3.4	41	3.5
Never married	292	22.7	250	21.4	327	27.6
Prefer not to answer	1	0.1	–	–	2	0.2
<b>Household income</b>						
Less than \$10,000	256	19.9	191	16.3	209	19.1
\$10,000–\$19,999	271	21.1	219	18.8	239	21.8
\$20,000–\$29,999	187	14.5	151	13.0	193	17.6
\$30,000–\$39,999	208	16.2	102	8.7	185	16.9
\$40,000–\$49,999	83	6.5	198	17.0	75	6.9
\$50,000 or more	151	11.8	204	19.2	192	17.6
Don't know	48	3.7	41	3.5	40	3.4
Prefer not to answer	81	6.3	62	5.3	53	4.5

Note. GSS = General Social Survey.

into one of six ordinal categories, as presented in Table 2. The average age of respondents was 44.75 years in 1996 ( $SD = 16.619$ ), 45.73 in 2004 ( $SD = 16.400$ ), and 49.69 in 2014 ( $SD = 17.582$ ). More females (range: 53.7%–56.7%) than males (range: 43.3%–46.3%) and almost 80% of respondents reported their race as white (range: 77.2%–82.5%). The highest percentages of respondents answered that they were married (range: 44.1%–53.0%) and had household incomes between \$10,000 and \$19,999 (range: 18.8%–21.8%).

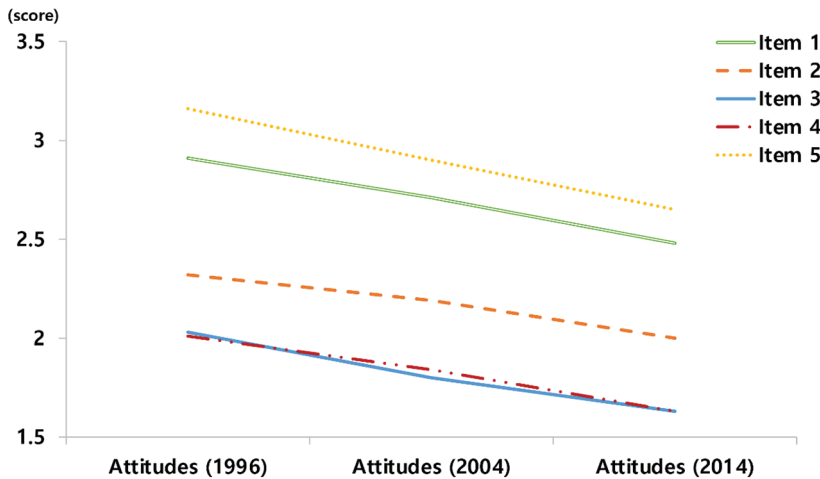
Descriptive Statistics of Attitudes Toward Immigrants

Table 3 presents each of the five items measuring respondents’ attitudes toward immigrants and their descriptive statistics. It was found that with all five items, U.S. citizens’ attitudes toward immigrants have tended to become unfavorable over time (see Table 3 and Figure 3). For all the three data sets, respondents reported the most negative attitudes for Item 4 (“Immigrants increase crime rates”) and Item 3 (“Immigrants are generally good for America’s economy”). Respondents reported the highest score for Item 5 (“America should take stronger measures to exclude illegal immigrants”), indicating that relatively more U.S. citizens opposed taking stronger measures to exclude illegal immigrants. However, Item 5 had the biggest drop in score between 1996 and 2014, indicating that negative attitudes toward illegal immigrants had highly intensified.

Table 3  
Descriptive Statistics of Respondents’ Attitudes Toward Immigrants by Item

Questionnaire Item	GSS 1996 ( <i>n</i> = 1,285)		GSS 2004 ( <i>n</i> = 1,168)		GSS 2014 ( <i>n</i> = 1,186)	
	Mean	<i>SD</i>	Mean	<i>SD</i>	Mean	<i>SD</i>
1. The number of immigrants to America nowadays should be reduced.	2.91	1.026	2.71	1.038	2.48	1.055
2. Immigrants take jobs away from people who were born in America.	2.32	1.091	2.19	1.136	2.00	1.089
3. Immigrants are generally good for America’s economy.*	2.03	0.950	1.80	0.993	1.63	0.933
4. Immigrants increase crime rates.	2.01	1.047	1.84	1.045	1.63	1.023
5. America should take stronger measures to exclude illegal immigrants.	3.16	0.996	2.90	1.055	2.65	1.113

Note. GSS = General Social Survey.  
\*Reverse-coded question.

**Figure 3.** Average Scores of Five GSS Items Measuring Respondents' Attitudes Toward Immigrants

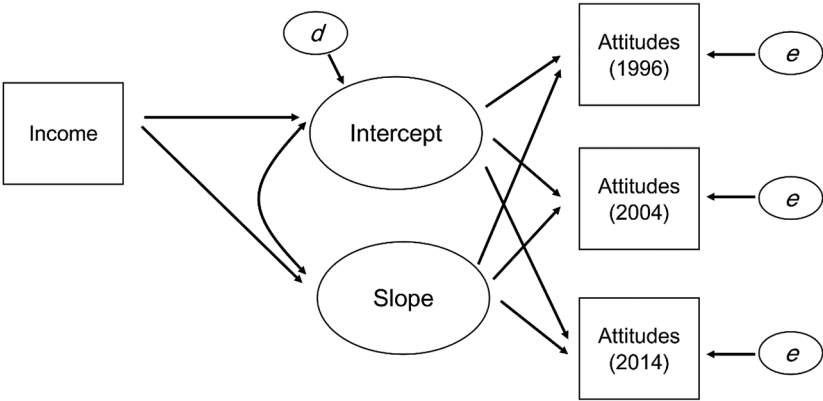
Note. GSS = General Social Survey.

### Latent Growth Model

Figure 4 shows the latent growth model for this study. As the descriptive statistics of attitudes toward immigrants demonstrate, the model illustrated the tendency of anti-immigrant sentiments to become more severe over time. The LGM analysis was conducted to examine whether this trajectory is statistically significant and which individual characteristics significantly affect the trajectory. This study captured growth patterns with two latent variables (intercept and slope) that represent the trajectory of U.S. citizens' attitudes toward immigrants in 1996, 2004, and 2014 (see Figure 4). Multiple fit indices indicated that the data for this study fit this latent growth models well:  $\chi^2 (df) = 1.177 (1) (p = .278)$ ; RMSEA = .012 (90% CI [.000, .077]); SRMR = .011; TLI = 0.909; CFI = 0.970.

Table 4 provides the results of the LGM that examined the trajectory of U.S. citizens' attitudes toward immigrants from 1996 to 2014. The results show that the attitudes of U.S. citizens have become significantly more negative over the period (intercept = 2.510,  $SE = .020$ ,  $p < .001$ ; slope =  $-.025$ ,  $SE = .002$ ,  $p < .001$ ). Figure 5 shows the average attitudes toward immigrants and estimated attitude trajectory. When examining sample means, attitudes toward immigrants have become more negative from 1996 to 2014. However, when examining the estimated average trajectory of the attitudes, anti-immigrant attitudes have become more severe since 2004 compared to the change from 1996 to 2004. Lastly, respondents' annual household income significantly affects the intercept ( $\beta = -.027$ ,  $SE = .007$ ,  $p < .001$ ) and the slope of the attitudes ( $\beta = .002$ ,  $SE = .001$ ,  $p = .006$ ). This means

Figure 4. Research Design for Latent Growth Analysis

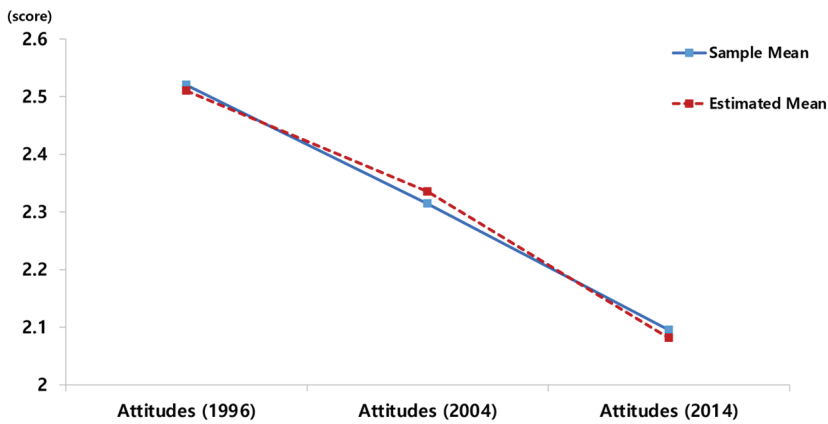


Note. Control variables include age, gender, race, and marital status. *d* = structural error; *e* = measurement error.

Table 4  
Latent Growth Model of Attitudes Toward Immigrants

Parameter	Estimate	SE
Intercept	2.510***	0.020
Slope	−0.025***	0.002
Intercept on		
Income	−0.027***	0.007
Age	0.003	0.001
Gender	0.003	0.043
Race	−0.087	0.048
Marital status	−0.020	0.015
Slope on		
Income	0.003**	0.001
Age	0.001	0.001
Gender	0.003	0.004
Race	0.001	0.004
Marital status	0.001	0.001

Note.  
\*\**p* < .01.  
\*\*\**p* < .001.

*Figure 5. Sample Mean and Estimated Trajectory of Attitudes Toward Immigrants*

that among U.S. citizens whose income level was higher, attitudes toward immigrants have become relatively less negative than those of individuals with lower income.

### Discussion

The number of non-European immigrants from non-English-speaking countries in the United States has continuously increased since the Immigration Act of 1965 abolished the discriminatory quotas based on race or national origin. Blumer's (1958) prejudice theory explains that the greater size of an out-group (e.g., immigrants) can result in a stronger sense of threat perceived by the in-group (e.g., nonimmigrants). The current study found that as immigration to the United States increased, U.S. citizens' attitudes toward immigrants became more negative since 1996, supporting the threat hypothesis. Notably, results of the current study suggest that anti-immigrant sentiments will continue to intensify without action to increase awareness of prejudice and correct biased views and misconceptions about immigrants.

In addition, this study identified that respondents' annual household income significantly affected both the intercept and slope, indicating that low-income U.S. citizens had more negative attitudes toward immigrants and that those negative attitudes have intensified more drastically than attitudes among their higher income peers. This finding aligns with previous studies based on the threat hypothesis of Blumer's (1958) prejudice theory, which identified that U.S. citizens perceived immigrants as competitors for scarce jobs (Bonacich, 1972; Borjas, 1987; Card, 1990; Mayda, 2006; Scheve & Slaughter, 2001) and believed that large numbers of immigrants would threaten their job prospects and general welfare (Czaika, 2015; Yu, 2019).

Immigrants accounted for 17% (27.6 million) of the total U.S. civilian labor force in 2016 (161.8 million), and the proportion of foreign-born workers in the labor force more than tripled—from 5% to 17%—between 1970 and 2018 (Batalova et al., 2020). Contrary to widespread public perceptions, several studies have documented immigrants' positive economic contributions to the United States (Council of Economic Advisers, 2007; Li, 2000; Nadadur, 2009; Stone, 2017). In addition, according to Greenwood et al. (1996) and Papademetriou and Terrazas (2009), immigrants' negative influence on the wages and employment opportunities of native U.S. workers was small and not significant. Future studies could provide additional information on how best to address negative stereotypes and misconceptions about immigrants, including how to use mass media to deliver accurate perceptions of immigrants and minimize racial cues (Harell et al., 2012).

### **Limitations**

Although this study reports important findings regarding public attitudes toward immigrants in the United States, several limitations should be noted. First, the GSS data sets did not distinguish naturalized U.S. citizens from native-born citizens. Because these groups might hold different attitudes toward immigrants, it is necessary to examine the difference. Second, this study used only the three GSS data sets that included a specific module on immigration; other GSS data sets did not ask about respondents' attitudes toward immigrants. The three GSS data sets used for this study end in 2014, and thus, results do not fully present the change of public attitudes toward immigrants in the United States, particularly in the context of more recent sociopolitical changes. In addition, for LGM analysis, at least three time points are required, and more time points provide greater latitude when specifying a conditional LGM analysis that involves various predictors of the trajectory (Duncan & Duncan, 2009). Third, the three individual GSS data sets used were collected cross-sectionally. Although this study conducted LGM analysis to present the patterns of attitude change from 1996 to 2014, its internal validity is relatively lower than studies conducting LGM analysis with panel data. Fourth, because it used secondary data, this study could not fully cover potential factors and determinants of U.S. citizens' attitudes toward immigrants. Between 1996 and 2014, numerous exogenous factors have existed in the United States, such as the terrorist attacks of 9/11, the Iraq War, and the global economic recession, which might be strongly connected with anti-immigrant sentiments.

### **Implications and Conclusion**

Despite the limitations, this study contributes evidence that anti-immigrant sentiments have been growing in the United States since 1996 and that this anti-immigrant tendency among U.S. citizens could continue to intensify. Findings have

practical and policy implications for social work and related disciplines. First, this study can help social work scholars to generate research ideas related to public attitudes toward immigrants in the United States. Because this study also shows that anti-immigrant sentiments in the United States are likely to become more severe over time, additional research on the growth of anti-immigrant sentiments and the effects on immigrants in the United States are needed. For example, a measure is needed to better assess public attitudes toward immigrants, and more current data on public attitudes toward immigrants are needed as well. Future research should use data that include more comprehensive variables and explore additional underlying factors, such as geographic location, employment status, working condition, and political orientation. Use of qualitative methods would provide deeper insight into anti-immigrant sentiments and their influence on immigrants' lives in the United States.

This study may also be useful for social work educators and activists. Results show that lower income U.S. citizens are more likely to have negative attitudes toward immigrants. Therefore, more education programs and campaigns targeting lower income U.S. citizens are required to improve anti-immigrant sentiments. In addition, the current study found that U.S. citizens were particularly anxious that immigrants might take jobs, might harm America's economy, and might increase crime rates. However, many studies refute these perceptions, demonstrating that immigrants contribute to the U.S. economy in many positive ways. From a review of Census data, Card (2005) identified that immigration did not negatively influence labor market opportunities for natives. In fact, immigration plays an important role in improving market efficiency by supplying workers to regions suffering from labor shortages (Borjas, 2001). Sherman et al. (2019) provided further evidence, explaining that immigrants tend to be mobile workers and move around the country in response to shortages in local labor markets. Research has also found that immigrants in the United States were less likely than natives to commit crimes and that increasing immigration led to reduced crime (M. T. Lee et al., 2001; Moehling & Piehl, 2009; Ousey & Kubrin, 2014; Waters & Pineau, 2015). Blumer's (1958) prejudice theory explained that in-group members (e.g., nonimmigrants) can feel they are threatened by new entrants regardless of whether the threat actually exists. Social work educators and activists are ethically bound to correct biased views and misconceptions about immigrants in the United States, which may be more prevalent among low-income individuals. The National Association of Social Workers Code of Ethics (2021) states that social workers should take action against oppression, racism, discrimination, and inequities (ethical standard 1.05 [b]) and become educated about diversity and oppression with respect to immigration status (ethical standard 1.05 [d]).

Third, policymakers can use this study to inform future immigration policies or social programs for immigrants. As Esses et al. (2002) noted, negative attitudes toward

immigrants could lead to narrow immigrant eligibility criteria for social benefits and raise policy barriers to the settlement of newcomers. Consequently, the unfavorable attitudes toward immigrants may lead to immigrant isolation and social conflicts. Restrictive policies—such as building a wall on the border with Mexico, ceasing legal immigration, and raiding and deporting undocumented immigrants—have been proposed or implemented (Pierce & Selee, 2017; Pierce et al., 2018) in recent years. Policy intervention is needed to increase awareness of anti-immigrant prejudice and bias.

Public attitudes toward immigrants interact with the collective vision of national identity, influencing the perception of who is (and who is not) considered a member of the national in-group (Esses et al., 2002). Thus, public attitudes toward immigrants are the crucial factor influencing immigrants' adaptation to new circumstances (Malti et al., 2012; Williams, 2016). This study exposes the growing presence of anti-immigrant sentiments among U.S. citizens, which is likely to result in increased difficulties for immigrants and potential social division.

### Author Notes

**Sunwoo Lee**, MSW, PhD, is a senior researcher at the Korea National Council on Social Welfare. Correspondence regarding this article should be directed to Sunwoo Lee, 14 Mallijae-ro, Policy Research Division, Korea National Council on Social Welfare, Mapo-gu, Seoul, South Korea, 04195 or via e-mail to [sunwoolee25@ssnkorrea.or.kr](mailto:sunwoolee25@ssnkorrea.or.kr).

### Acknowledgments

I would like to thank Mary Ager, David O. Okech, Jane McPherson, and Javier F. Boyas for their insightful comments on this manuscript.

### References

- Adida, C. L., Laitin, D. D., & Valfort, M. A. (2010). Identifying barriers to Muslim integration in France. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*, 107(52), 22384–22390. <https://doi.org/10.1073/pnas.1015550107>
- Aleksynska, M., & Tritah, A. (2015). The heterogeneity of immigrants, host countries' income and productivity: A channel accounting approach. *Economic Inquiry*, 53(1), 150–172. <https://doi.org/10.1111/ecin.12141>
- Arango, J. (2016). *Spain: new migration policies needed for an emerging diaspora*. Migration Policy Institute. <https://www.migrationpolicyinstitute-europe.com/sites/default/files/publications/TCM-Emigration-Spain-FINAL.pdf>
- Batalova, J., Blizzard, B., & Bolter, J. (2020). *Frequently requested statistics on immigrants and immigration in the United States*. Migration Policy Institute. <https://www.migrationpolicy.org/article/frequently-requested-statistics-immigrants-and-immigration-united-states>
- Batalova, J., Soto, A. G. R., & Mittelstadt, M. (2017). *Protecting the DREAM: The potential impact of different legislative scenarios for unauthorized youth* [Fact sheet]. Migration Policy Institute. <https://www.migrationpolicy.org/sites/default/files/publications/DreamAct-%20Oct2017-FINAL.pdf>



- Bauer, T. K., Lofstrom, M., & Zimmermann, K. F. (2001). *Immigration policy, assimilation of immigrants and natives' sentiments towards immigrants: Evidence from 12 OECD-Countries* (Centre for Comparative Immigration Studies Working Paper 33). University of California–San Diego. <https://www.econstor.eu/bitstream/10419/21030/1/dp187.pdf>
- Bentler, P. M. (1990). Comparative fit indexes in structural models. *Psychological Bulletin*, 107(2), 238–246. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0033-2909.107.2.238>
- Bentler, P. M., & Bonett, D. G. (1980). Significance tests and goodness of fit in the analysis of covariance structures. *Psychological Bulletin*, 88(3), 588–606. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0033-2909.88.3.588>
- Blalock, H. (1967). *Toward a theory of minority-group relations*. Wiley.
- Blumer, H. (1958). Race prejudice as a sense of group position. *Pacific Sociological Review*, 1(1), 3–7. <https://doi.org/10.2307/1388607>
- Bobo, L. (1983). Whites' opposition to busing: Symbolic racism or realistic group conflict? *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 45(6), 1196–1210. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-3514.45.6.1196>
- Bobo, L., & Zubrinsky, C. L. (1996). Attitudes on residential integration: Perceived status differences, mere in-group preference, or racial prejudice? *Social Forces*, 74(3), 883–909. <https://doi.org/10.1093/sf/74.3.883>
- Bonacich, E. (1972). A theory of ethnic antagonism: The split labor market. *American Sociological Review*, 37(5), 547–559. <https://doi.org/10.2307/2093450>
- Borjas, G. J. (1987). Immigrants, minorities, and labor market competition. *Industrial and Labor Relations Review*, 40(3), 382–392. <https://doi.org/10.1177/001979398704000305>
- Borjas, G. J. (2001). Does immigration grease the wheels of the labor market? *Brookings Papers on Economic Activity*, 1(2001), 69–133. <https://doi.org/10.1353/eca.2001.0011>
- Brader, T., Valentino, N. A., & Suhay, E. (2008). What triggers public opposition to immigration? Anxiety, group cues, and immigration threat. *American Journal of Political Science*, 52(4), 959–978. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1540-5907.2008.00353.x>
- Branton, R., Cassese, E. C., Jones, B. S., & Westerland, C. (2011). All along the watchtower: Acculturation fear, anti-Latino affect, and immigration. *The Journal of Politics*, 73(3), 664–679. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0022381611000375>
- Card, D. (1990). The impact of the Mariel boatlift on the Miami labor market. *Industrial and Labor Relations Review*, 43(2), 245–257. <https://doi.org/10.1177/001979399004300205>
- Card, D. (2005). Is the new immigration really so bad? *The Economic Journal*, 115(507), F300–F323. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1468-0297.2005.01037.x>
- Ceobanu, A. M., & Escandell, X. (2010). Comparative analyses of public attitudes toward immigrants and immigration using multinational survey data: A review of theories and research. *Annual Review of Sociology*, 36, 309–328. <https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev.soc.012809.102651>
- Chen, F. F. (2007). Sensitivity of goodness of fit indexes to lack of measurement invariance. *Structural Equation Modeling*, 14(3), 464–504. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10705510701301834>
- Chung, I. (2011). Sociocultural study of immigrant suicide-attempters: An ecological perspective. *Journal of Social Work*, 12(6), 614–629. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1468017310394240>
- Cortes, K. E. (2004). Are refugees different from economic immigrants? Some empirical evidence on the heterogeneity of immigrant groups in the United States. *Review of Economics and Statistics*, 86(2), 465–480. <https://doi.org/10.1162/003465304323031058>
- Council of Economic Advisers. (2007). The U.S. Council of Economic Advisers on immigration's economic impact. *Population and Development Review*, 33(3), 641–652. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1728-4457.2007.00189.x>

- Crea, T. M., Lopez, A., Hasson, R. G., Evans, K., Palleschi, C., & Underwood, D. (2018). Unaccompanied immigrant children in long term foster care: Identifying needs and best practices from a child welfare perspective. *Children and Youth Services Review*, 92, 56–64. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.childyouth.2017.12.017>
- Czaika, M. (2015). Migration and economic prospects. *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, 41(1), 58–82. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1369183X.2014.924848>
- Dovidio, J. F., Brigham, J. C., Johnson, B. T., & Gaertner, S. L. (1996). Stereotyping, prejudice, and discrimination: Another look. In N. Macrae, C. Stangor, & M. Hewstone (Eds.), *Foundations of stereotypes and stereotyping* (pp. 276–319). Guilford Press.
- Duncan, T. E., & Duncan, S. C. (2009). The ABC's of LGM: An introductory guide to latent variable growth curve modeling. *Social and Personality Psychology Compass*, 3(6), 979–991. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1751-9004.2009.00224.x>
- Esses, V. M., Dovidio, J. F., & Hodson, G. (2002). Public attitudes toward immigration in the United States and Canada in response to the September 11, 2001 "Attack on America." *Analyses of Social Issues and Public Policy*, 2(1), 69–85. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1530-2415.2002.00028.x>
- Esses, V. M., Dovidio, J. F., Jackson, L. M., & Armstrong, T. L. (2001). The immigration dilemma: The role of perceived group competition, ethnic prejudice, and national identity. *Journal of Social Issues*, 57(3), 389–412. <https://doi.org/10.1111/0022-4537.00220>
- Esses, V. M., Jackson, L. M., & Armstrong, T. L. (1998). Intergroup competition and attitudes toward immigrants and immigration: An instrumental model of group conflict. *Journal of Social Issues*, 54(4), 699–724. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1540-4560.1998.tb01244.x>
- Ewing, W. (2012). Opportunity and exclusion: A brief history of U.S. immigration policy. *Immigration Policy Center*. <http://immigrationpolicy.org/special-reports/opportunity-and-exclusion-brief-history-us-immigration-policy>
- Fetzer, J. S. (2011). *The evolution of public attitudes toward immigration in Europe and the United States, 2000–2010*. European University Institute. [https://cadmus.eui.eu/bitstream/handle/1814/17840/EU-US%20Immigration%20Systems%202011\\_10.pdf](https://cadmus.eui.eu/bitstream/handle/1814/17840/EU-US%20Immigration%20Systems%202011_10.pdf)
- Flores, R. D. (2018). Can elites shape public attitudes toward immigrants?: Evidence from the 2016 U.S. presidential election. *Social Forces*, 96(4), 1649–1690. <https://doi.org/10.1093/sf/soy001>
- Fossett, M. A., & Kiecolt, K. J. (1989). The relative size of minority populations and white racial attitudes. *Social Science Quarterly*, 70(4), 820–835. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/42862663>
- Fussell, E. (2014). Warmth of the welcome: Attitudes toward immigrants and immigration policy in the United States. *Annual Review of Sociology*, 40, 479–498. <https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev-soc-071913-043325>
- George, D., & Mallery, P. (2003). *SPSS for Windows step by step: A simple guide and reference 11.0 update* (4th ed.). Allyn & Bacon.
- Giles, M. W., & Evans, A. (1986). The measurement errors were not allowed power approach to intergroup hostility. *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, 30(3), 469–486. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0022002786030003004>
- Gliem, J. A., & Gliem, R. R. (2003, October 8–10). *Calculating, interpreting, and reporting Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficient for Likert-type scales* [Conference presentation]. Midwest Research-to-Practice Conference in Adult, Continuing, and Community Education, The Ohio State University, Columbus, OH. <https://scholarworks.iupui.edu/bitstream/handle/1805/344/Gliem%20&%20Gliem.pdf?s>
- Goo, S. K. (2015). *What Americans want to do about illegal immigration*. Pew Research Center. <http://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2015/08/24/what-americans-want-to-do-about-illegal-immigration/>

- Gray, N. N., Mendelsohn, D. M., & Omoto, A. M. (2015). Community connectedness, challenges, and resilience among gay Latino immigrants. *American Journal of Community Psychology*, 55(1–2), 202–214. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10464-014-9697-4>
- Greenwood, M. J., Hunt, G., & Kohli, U. (1996). The short-run and long-run factor-market consequences of immigration to the United States. *Journal of Regional Science*, 36(1), 43–66. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-9787.1996.tb01100.x>
- Grieco, E. M., Acosta, Y. D., de la Cruz G. P., Gambino, C., Gryn, T., & Larsen, L. J. (2012). *The foreign-born population in the United States: 2010: American Community Survey Reports*. Population Division, U.S. Census Bureau.
- Hainmueller, J., & Hiscox, M. J. (2010). Attitudes toward highly skilled and low-skilled immigration: Evidence from a survey experiment. *American Political Science Review*, 104(1), 61–84. <https://doi.org/10.2307/27798540>
- Hainmueller, J., & Hopkins, D. J. (2015). The hidden American immigration consensus: A conjoint analysis of attitudes toward immigrants. *American Journal of Political Science*, 59(3), 529–548. <https://doi.org/10.1111/ajps.12138>
- Hanna, A. M. V., & Ortega, D. M. (2016). Salir adelante (perseverance): Lessons from the Mexican immigrant experience. *Journal of Social Work*, 16(1), 47–65. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1468017314560301>
- Harell, A., Soroka, S., Iyengar, S., & Valentino, N. (2012). The impact of economic and cultural cues on support for immigration in Canada and the United States. *Canadian Journal of Political Science*, 45(3), 499–530. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0008423912000698>
- Harris, D. A. (2006). The war on terror, local police, and immigration enforcement: A curious tale of police power in post-9/11 America. *Rutgers Law Journal*, 38(1), 1–60. [https://scholarship.law.pitt.edu/fac\\_articles/114](https://scholarship.law.pitt.edu/fac_articles/114)
- Hero, R. E., & Preuhs, R. R. (2007). Immigration and the evolving American welfare state: Examining policies in the U.S. states. *American Journal of Political Science*, 51(3), 498–517. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1540-5907.2007.00264.x>
- Hu, L., & Bentler, P. M. (1999). Cutoff criteria for fit indexes in covariance structure analysis: Conventional criteria versus new alternatives. *Structural Equation Modeling*, 6(1), 1–55. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10705519909540118>
- Illegal Immigration Reform and Immigrant Responsibility Act of 1996, Pub. L. No. 104-208, 110 Stat. 3009 (1996). <https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/PLAW-104publ208/pdf/PLAW-104publ208.pdf>
- Jaret, C. (1999). Troubled by newcomers: Anti-immigrant attitudes and action during two eras of mass immigration to the United States. *Journal of American Ethnic History*, 18(3), 9–39. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/27502448>
- Jones, J. M. (2001, July 18). *Americans have mixed opinions about immigration*. Gallup. <https://news.gallup.com/poll/4693/americans-mixed-opinions-about-immigration.aspx>
- Jung, G. M. (2007). *Structural equation modeling between leisure involvement, consumer satisfaction, and behavioral loyalty in fitness centers in Taiwan* [Doctoral dissertation, United States Sports Academy]. <https://www.proquest.com/dissertations-theses/structural-equation-modeling-between-leisure/docview/304717321/se-2>
- Kline, R. B. (2011). *Principles and practice of structural equation modeling* (3rd ed.). Guilford Press.
- Lee, M. T., Martinez, R., & Rosenfeld, R. (2001). Does immigration increase homicide? Negative evidence from three border cities. *The Sociological Quarterly*, 42(4), 559–580. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1533-8525.2001.tb01780.x>
- Lee, T., Cai, L., & MacCallum, R. C. (2012). Power analysis for tests of structural equation modeling. In R. H. Hoyle (Ed.), *Handbook of structural equation modeling* (pp. 181–194). Guilford Press.

- Li, P. S. (2000). Economic returns of immigrants' self-employment. *Cahiers Canadiens de Sociologie [The Canadian Journal of Sociology]*, 25(1), 1–34. <https://doi.org/10.2307/3341909>
- Lopez, M. H., Passel, J., & Rohal, M. (2015, September 28). *Modern immigration wave brings 59 million to U.S., driving population growth and change through 2065: Views of immigration's impact on U.S. society mixed* [Report]. Pew Research Center. <https://www.pewhispanic.org/2015/09/28/modern-immigration-wave-brings-59-million-to-u-s-driving-population-growth-and-change-through-2065/>
- Malti, T., Killen, M., & Gasser, L. (2012). Social judgments and emotion attributions about exclusion in Switzerland. *Child Development*, 83(2), 697–711. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-8624.2011.01705.x>
- Mayda, A. M. (2006). Who is against immigration? A cross-country investigation of individual attitudes toward immigrants. *The Review of Economics and Statistics*, 88(3), 510–530. <https://doi.org/10.1162/rest.88.3.510>
- Meuleman, B., Davidov, E., & Billiet, J. (2009). Changing attitudes toward immigration in Europe, 2002–2007: A dynamic group conflict theory approach. *Social Science Research*, 38(2), 352–365. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ssresearch.2008.09.006>
- Migration Policy Institute. (2019). *Regions of birth for immigrants in the United States, 1960–Present*. Retrieved April 30, 2019, from <https://www.migrationpolicy.org/programs/data-hub/charts/regions-immigrant-birth-1960-present>
- Moehling, C., & Piehl, A. M. (2009). Immigration, crime, and incarceration in early twentieth-century America. *Demography*, 46(4), 739–763. <https://doi.org/10.1353/dem.0.0076>
- Moore, D. W. (2001, May 3). *Americans ambivalent about immigrants*. Gallup. <https://news.gallup.com/poll/1561/americans-ambivalent-about-immigrants.aspx>
- Morey, B. N., Gee, G. C., Muennig, P., & Hatzenbuehler, M. L. (2018). Community-level prejudice and mortality among immigrant groups. *Social Science & Medicine*, 199, 56–66. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.socscimed.2017.04.020>
- Muthén, L. K., & Muthén, B. O. (2015). *Mplus user's guide* (7th ed.). Muthén & Muthén.
- Nadadur, R. (2009). Illegal immigration: A positive economic contribution to the United States. *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, 35(6), 1037–1052. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13691830902957775>
- National Association of Social Workers. (2021). *Code of ethics of the National Association of Social Workers*. <https://www.socialworkers.org/About/Ethics/Code-of-Ethics/Code-of-Ethics-English>
- National Opinion Research Center. (n.d.). *GSS data explorer* [Data set]. Retrieved January 11, 2019, from <https://gssdataexplorer.norc.org>
- Ostfeld, M. (2017). The backyard politics of attitudes toward immigration. *Political Psychology*, 38(1), 21–37. <https://doi.org/10.1111/pops.12314>
- Ousey, G. C., & Kubrin, C. E. (2014). Immigration and the changing nature of homicide in U.S. cities, 1980–2010. *Journal of Quantitative Criminology*, 30(3), 453–483. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10940-013-9210-5>
- Papademetriou, D. G., & Terrazas, A. (2009). *Immigrants and the current economic crisis: Research evidence, policy challenges, and implications*. Migration Policy Institute. <https://www.migrationpolicy.org/research/immigrants-and-current-economic-crisis-research-evidence-policy-challenges-and-implications>
- Parra-Cardona, J. R., Bullock, L. A., Imig, D. R., Villarruel, F. A., & Gold, S. J. (2006). “Trabajando duro todos los días”: Learning from the life experiences of Mexican-origin migrant families. *Family Relations*, 55(3), 361–375. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1741-3729.2006.00409.x>

- Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996, Pub. L. No. 104-193, 110 Stat. 2105 (1996). <https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/PLAW-104publ193/pdf/PLAW-104publ193.pdf>
- Pierce, S., Bolter, J., & Selee, A. (2018). *Trump's first year on immigration policy: Rhetoric vs. Reality*. Migration Policy Institute. [https://immigrantfresno.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/05/TrumpFirstYearImmigrationPolicy\\_FINAL.pdf](https://immigrantfresno.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/05/TrumpFirstYearImmigrationPolicy_FINAL.pdf)
- Pierce, S., & Selee, A. (2017). *Immigration under Trump: A review of policy shifts in the year since the election*. Migration Policy Institute. <https://www.migrationpolicy.org/research/immigration-under-trump-review-policy-shifts>
- Preacher, K. J., Wichman, A. L., Briggs, N. E., & MacCallum, R. C. (2008). *Latent growth curve modeling*. SAGE Publications.
- Quillian, L. (1996). Group threat and regional change in attitudes toward African-Americans. *American Journal of Sociology*, 102(3), 816–860. <https://doi.org/10.1086/230998>
- Quillian, L. (2006). New approaches to understanding racial prejudice and discrimination. *Annual Review of Sociology*, 32, 299–328. <https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev.soc.32.061604.123132>
- Radford, J. (2019). *Key findings about U.S. immigrants*. Pew Research Center. <https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2019/06/17/key-findings-about-u-s-immigrants/>
- Raykov, T. (1998). Coefficient alpha and composite reliability with interrelated nonhomogeneous items. *Applied Psychological Measurement*, 22(4), 375–385. <https://doi.org/10.1177/014662169802200407>
- Roth, B. J. (2017). When college is illegal: Undocumented Latino/a youth and mobilizing social support for educational attainment in South Carolina. *Journal of the Society for Social Work and Research*, 8(4), 539–561. <https://doi.org/10.1086/694325>
- Saran, A. (2009). *Public attitudes on immigration: The United Kingdom in an international context*. Migration Policy Institute. <https://www.migrationpolicy.org/sites/default/files/publications/TCM-SaranCommentary.pdf>
- Scheve, K. F., & Slaughter, M. J. (2001). Labor market competition and individual preferences over immigration policy. *Review of Economics and Statistics*, 83(1), 133–145. <https://doi.org/10.1162/003465301750160108>
- Sherman, A., Trisi, D., Stone, C., Gonzales, S., & Parrott, S. (2019, August 15). *Immigrants contribute greatly to U.S. economy, despite administration's "public charge" rule rationale*. Center on Budget and Policy Priorities. <https://www.cbpp.org/research/poverty-and-inequality/immigrants-contribute-greatly-to-us-economy-despite-administrations>
- Simon, R. J., & Alexander, S. H. (1993). *The ambivalent welcome: Print media, public opinion, and immigration*. Praeger Publishers.
- Simon, R. J., & Lynch, J. P. (1999). A comparative assessment of public opinion toward immigrants and immigration policies. *International Migration Review*, 33(2), 455–467. <https://doi.org/10.1177/019791839903300207>
- Sniderman, P. M., Hagendoorn, L., & Prior, M. (2004). Predisposing factors and situational triggers: Exclusionary reactions to immigrant minorities. *American Political Science Review*, 98(1), 35–49. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S000305540400098X>
- Steiger, J. H. (1990). Structural model evaluation and modification: An interval estimation approach. *Multivariate Behavioral Research*, 25(2), 173–180. [https://doi.org/10.1207/s15327906mbr2502\\_4](https://doi.org/10.1207/s15327906mbr2502_4)
- Stone, C. (2017, September 27). *Ending DACA program for young undocumented immigrants makes no economic sense*. Center on Budget and Policy Priorities. <https://www.cbpp.org/research/economy/ending-daca-program-for-young-undocumented-immigrants-makes-no-economic-sense>

- Taber, K. S. (2018). The use of Cronbach's alpha when developing and reporting research instruments in science education. *Research in Science Education*, 48, 1273–1296. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11165-016-9602-2>
- Taylor, M. C. (1998). How white attitudes vary with the racial composition of local populations: Numbers count. *American Sociological Review*, 63(4), 512–535. <https://doi.org/10.2307/2657265>
- Taylor, M. C., & Mateyka, P. J. (2011). Community influences on white racial attitudes: What matters and why? *The Sociological Quarterly*, 52(2), 220–243. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1533-8525.2011.01202.x>
- Valentino, N. A., & Iyengar, S. (2011). *Skin vs. skill: Exploring economic vs. racial threats as drivers of immigration opinion in the comparative context* [Paper presentation]. 2011 Meeting of the Midwest Political Science Association, Chicago, IL.
- Ward, C., & Masgoret, A. M. (2008). Attitudes toward immigrants, immigration, and multiculturalism in New Zealand: A social psychological analysis. *International Migration Review*, 42(1), 227–248. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1747-7379.2007.00119.x>
- Waters, M. C., & Pineau, M. G. (Eds.). (2015). Legal status and immigrant integration. In *The integration of immigrants into American society* (pp. 93–158). National Academies Press.
- Williams, J. C. (2016). "It's always with you, that you're different": Undocumented students and social exclusion. *Journal of Poverty*, 20(2), 168–193. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10875549.2015.1094766>
- Yu, S. (2019). An examination of the attitudes towards immigration across U.S. demographic groups. *Sociology Senior Seminar Papers*, 3(2), 1–42. <https://doi.org/10.31235/osf.io/wvbrj>

Manuscript submitted: September 18, 2020

First revision submitted: January 3, 2021

Second revision submitted: January 28, 2021

Accepted: January 31, 2021

Electronically published: March 15, 2023