Immigration Politics and Policymaking in the USA (2017–2021): Examining the Effect of Geopolitics on Public Attitude Towards Immigration Policies

Michael K. Dzordzormenyoh[1] · Francis D. Boateng[2]

Abstract

Previous attitudinal studies on immigration in the USA largely focus on the predictors of anti-immigration sentiments compared to examining immigration policies. The dearth of scientific enquiry about the latter necessitated the present study. By analyzing individual-level data ($n = 1018$) obtained from the Public Religion Research Institute (PRRI), we assess the effect of geopolitics–red and blue states and other factors on public attitude towards six immigration policies in the USA (2017–2021). Overall, the results indicate a null relationship between geopolitics and public attitude towards immigration policies. Additionally, we observed several sociodemographic factors, such as age, political ideology, party affiliation, and region, influence public attitude towards immigration policies. Based on these results, it is recommended that immigration policies formulated and implemented in the USA must be based on empirical evidence and not sentiments.

✉ Michael K. Dzordzormenyoh
   mdzordzo@kent.edu

   Francis D. Boateng
   fboateng@olemiss.edu

[1]   Department of Political Science, Kent State University, 302 Bowman Hall, Kent, OH 44242, USA

[2]   School of Applied Sciences, Department of Criminal Justice and Legal Studies, University of Mississippi, Mayes 303, P. O. Box 1848, Oxford, MS 38677, USA

Introduction

Each of the fifty states in the USA can be viewed or categorized as either red (republican) or blue (democrat) states based on electoral or voting patterns, majority political ideology, and the dominance of either the Republican or Democratic party in the state (Levendusky & Pope, 2011; Miller & Conover, 2015; Nivola & Brady, 2007; Rodden, 2005). Some studies refer to this phenomenon as geopolitics—the intersection of politics and geography (Davisson, 2011; May & McGarvey, 2017).

Although some previous studies have examined the association between geopolitics and public attitude towards immigration policy in the USA, the results are inconsistent and inconclusive (Bessett et al., 2015; May & McGarvey, 2017; Stanhope et al., 2019). Thus, it leads to calls for further investigation to bring nuance and augment the existing findings (Stanhope et al., 2019).

Studies examining the relationship between geopolitics and public attitude towards immigration policy in the USA can be broadly summarized into three categories. First, studies that focus on examining the association between an individual state and public attitude towards immigration policy (Lee et al., 2001). Second, studies that focus on examining the association between a group or bloc of states—Midwest, Northeast, and Southern states—and public attitude towards immigration policy (Sanders & Heineman, 2020). Third, studies that focus on examining the effect of electoral or voting pattern, and the dominance of either the Republican or Democratic party in the state—geopolitics—on public attitude towards immigration policy (Bessett et al., 2015; May & McGarvey, 2017).

The first two studies are commonplace in the extant literature compared to the third group of studies which are not because of the lack of scientific enquiry using this approach. Thus, it creates a gap in the existing literature that requires further investigation and the attention of researchers. Additionally, findings from geopolitics studies are mixed and require further investigation not only to augment the extant literature but also to add nuance to the findings.

Therefore, against this background, the present study seeks to add to the existing literature on the effect of geopolitics on public attitude towards immigration policy in the USA while addressing some of the existing gaps in the literature. To accomplish this goal, we analyzed 1018 responses obtained from the Public Religion Research Institute[1] guided by six research questions, namely:

- Research Question 1: What is the effect of geopolitics on public attitude towards laws and policies that separate parents from children at the border?
- Research Question 2: What is the effect of geopolitics on public attitude towards accepting refugees and immigrants facing danger in their home countries in the USA?

- Research Question 3: What is the effect of geopolitics on public attitude towards making conditions difficult for undocumented immigrants, so they return to their home country?
- Research Question 4: What is the effect of geopolitics on public attitude towards building a wall against immigrants in the USA?
- Research Question 5: What is the effect of geopolitics on public attitude towards laws preventing immigrants from entering the USA?
- Research Question 6: What is the effect of geopolitics on public attitude towards police stops targeted at undocumented immigrants with criminal background?

Overall, assessing the effect of geopolitics on public attitude towards six different immigration policies has several theoretical and policy implications. Theoretically, it augments previous studies seeking to understand the effect of geopolitics on immigration while adding nuance to the existing knowledge. Thus, the present study addresses a void in the present literature. Policy-wise, the present study sheds light on not just the effect of geopolitics on immigration but also on how citizens formulate their views and opinions that might apply to other policy issues and areas. Finally, the present study also reveals the effect of other factors on public attitude towards immigration policies in the USA.

We analyzed individual-level data of 1018 respondents (407 interviewed by landline and 611 interviewed by cellphones) obtained from the June 2018 national representative survey of adults 18 + years in the USA on immigration by the Public Religion Research Institute (PRRI). Using empirical evidence from the extant literature, the variables that influence public attitude towards immigration policies in the USA were categorized into the following variables: geopolitics, group conflict/instrumental group conflict, demographic contact/intergroup, political, sociodemographic characteristics of the public, and others.

Literature Review

Geopolitics, Public Attitude, Immigration Policies/Laws

Public attitude towards immigrants and immigration policy in the USA is influenced by several factors (Dzordzormenyoh & Perkins, 2022; McCann & Boateng, 2020). One of such factors is geopolitics–red or blue states (Davisson, 2011; May & McGarvey, 2017). Red or blue states are often identified based on the electoral or voting pattern of each of the states, the dominance of either the Republican or Democratic party within the state over a period of time or during a specific electoral cycle, and the presidential candidate that wins the electoral college vote of the state among other factors (Levendusky & Pope, 2011; Miller & Conover, 2015; Nivola & Brady, 2007; Rodden, 2005).

Empirical evidence from some geopolitics studies suggest that blue states turn to be pro-immigration while red states turn to be anti-immigration (Levendusky & Pope, 2011; Miller & Conover, 2015). Elections in the USA are not just means for voters to participate in democracy, but also they are means for voters to express their

policy preferences by choosing one candidate over the other (Major et al., 2018; Mayda et al., 2018). For instance, some studies contend that the election of Trump in 2016 was an indication of public support for some of his anti-immigrant sentiments and other policies espoused by the candidate (Bessett et al., 2015; Lee et al., 2001; May & McGarvey, 2017; McKanders, 2018; Sanders & Heineman, 2020). It was widely suggested that red states voted for the Trump because of the anti-immigration policies he sought to implement while blue states voted for Clinton because of her pro-immigration policies (Braaten & Braaten, 2021; Finley & Esposito, 2020; Glass & Levchak, 2014; Goodman, 2017). If geopolitics–red or blue states influence voters' choice for presidential candidates, does it influence public attitude towards immigration policies in any way?

Conflict Theories, Public Attitude, and Immigration Policies/Laws

Furthermore, besides the effect of geopolitics on public attitude towards immigration policy, the extant literature identifies other factors that influence public attitude towards immigration policy in the USA (Gorodzeisky & Semyonov, 2016; Pryce, 2018). Conflict between immigrants and the public over resources, such as job opportunities, welfare programs, and others, continues to influence public attitude towards immigrants in the USA (Florack et al., 2003; Gorodzeisky & Semyonov, 2016; McLaren, 2017; Pryce, 2018).

These groups of studies focusing on the conflict between immigrants and the public—group conflict—and instrumental group conflict theories contend that high levels of immigrant population create the perception of competition for existing resources with the public which leads to anti-immigration attitudes towards immigrants (McLaren, 2017; Pryce, 2018). These studies have been criticized for the failure to address internal conflicts within each of the groups and their overemphasis on external conflicts between immigrants and the public (Dzordzormenyoh & Perkins, 2022; Meuleman et al., 2009).

Additionally, some studies contend that conflicts between immigrants and the public that influence public attitude towards immigrants are the result of the lack of contact between both groups. Thus, these studies suggest that constant contact between immigrants and the public can help improve knowledge sharing and cultural assimilation, and reduce conflicts (Ceobanu & Escandell, 2008; Stangor et al., 1996). Although the existing literature have found that contact between immigrants and the public reduces negative perceptions about immigrants caused by issues of racism, false knowledge, xenophobia, and others (Allen & Goetz, 2021; Kilty & Haymes, 2000).

Critics argue that the contact between immigrants and the public through contact is a short-term solution and can also lead to unintended negative consequences (Dixon et al., 2007; Schlueter & Scheepers, 2010; Crisp and Turner 2013). For example, putting two or more diverse groups unwilling to work together can lead to more conflict and further reinforce negative perceptions held by the public about immigrants (Boateng et al., 2021).

Crime-Immigration, Public Attitude, and Immigration Policies/Laws

Moreover, previous studies argue that public attitude towards immigration policies in the USA is influenced by the perception of crime and the association of immigrants with crime (Chenane & Wright, 2021; Light & Miller, 2018). Immigration has been observed to lead to community heterogeneity, competition, conflict, and crime in some cases (Hébert et al., 2004; Light & Miller, 2018). In contrast to this view, immigration has been found to lead to innovation, strong family and friendship bonds, socio-economic opportunities, and the revitalization of dying communities and economies (Alba & Nee, 2003; Feldmeyer, 2009; Sampson, 2008; Sampson & Bean, 2006).

Other Explanations of Public Attitude Towards Immigration Policies/Laws

Finally, several studies have found diverse sociodemographic variables influence public attitude towards immigration policy in the USA. Specifically, some studies have found that population characteristics, such as age, political ideology, income, education, marital status, religion, region, rural–urban residency, and gender, continue to influence public attitude towards immigration policy in the USA (Bowling & Westenra, 2017; Brown & Brown, 2017; Davis & Deole, 2015; Docquier et al., 2012; Garcia & Davidson, 2013; Haaland & Roth, 2020; Knoll, 2009; Lichter, 2012; Provine & Sanchez, 2011). Similar to these findings, a recent study by Dzordzormenyoh & Perkins (2022) found that the international reputation and image of the USA based on the immigration policies espoused and implemented influence public attitude towards immigration (also see Kudrle, 2003; Rocha et al., 2015; Manley, 2017; Giuliano & Tabellini, 2020; Isaacs et al., 2020).

In conclusion, the review of literature informed the study variables utilized in this study. These variables can be grouped into the following: geopolitics, group conflict/instrumental group conflict, demographic contact/intergroup, political, sociodemographic characteristics of the public, and others. Table 1 provides a summary of the literature review and variables.

Methods

Data

We analyzed the individual-level data of 1018 respondents (407 interviewed by landline and 611 interviewed by cell phones) obtained from the June 2018 national representative survey of adults 18 + years in the USA on immigration by the Public Religion Research Institute (PRRI). PRRI[2] is a nonpartisan, independent research organization that conducts public opinion polls on a variety of different topics,

---

[2] Data source was from the Public Religion Research Institute (PRRI), https://www.prri.org. Accessed: Oct. 9, 2021.

Table 1 Summary of literature review

Literature reviewed	Brief explanation/variables
Geopolitics	Red and blue states influence public attitude towards immigrants and immigration policies
Group conflict and instrumental group conflict	Conflict between the public and immigrants influence public attitude towards immigrants and immigration policies
Demographic contact and intergroup	Contact between the public and immigrants influence public attitude towards immigrants and immigration policies
Political factors	Political trust, ideology, and international political image of the USA regarding immigration influence public attitude towards immigrants and immigration policies
Crime and immigration	Public perception of the association between crime and immigrants influences public attitude towards immigrants and immigration policies
Demographic characteristics	Race, gender, income, sexual orientation, party affiliation, etcetera, of the public influence public attitude towards immigrants and immigration policies

Source: compiled by authors

specializing in the quantitative and qualitative study of political issues as they relate to religious values. The survey was based on a probability sampling to ensure results are broadly representative of the entire US population. The surveys were administered to respondents in either English or Spanish. Overall, the survey includes Americans' views related to several immigration issues, including building a wall along the border between the USA and Mexico, banning refugees from entering the USA, the belief that America sets a good moral example for the world today on issues of immigration, and among other useful questions about immigration and the population characteristics of the respondents. We consider geopolitics, group conflict/instrumental group conflict, demographic contact/intergroup, political, sociodemographic characteristics of the public, and others explanatory factors that influence public attitude towards immigration policies in the USA.

Study Variables

Outcome Variables

The outcome variable for the present study is *public attitudes (support or opposition) towards immigrants and immigration policies in the USA*. The outcome variable was measured utilizing six questions from the survey. Measure 1 gauges the *public's attitude towards a border wall against immigrants entering the USA*.[3] The

---

[3] **Q1a:** Building a wall along the U.S. border with Mexico: strongly favor, favor, oppose or strongly oppose.

measure was coded as a dichotomous variable with 0 representing the public favor border walls and 1 representing the public oppose border walls. Additionally, measure 2 gauges the *public's attitude towards laws that prevent immigrants from entering the USA*.[4] The measure was coded as a binary variable with 0 representing the public favor laws preventing refugees and immigrants entering the USA and 1 representing the public oppose laws preventing refugees and immigrants entering the USA. Likewise, measure 3 gauges the *public's attitude towards laws and policies that separate parents from children at the border*,[5] and the measure was coded as 0 representing the public favor laws and policies that separate parents from children at the border and 1 representing the public oppose laws and policies that separate parents from children at the border.

Moreover, measure 4 gauges the *public's attitude towards the USA not accepting refugees and immigrants facing danger in their home countries in the USA*,[6] and the measure was coded as 0 representing the public agree and 1 representing the public disagree. Furthermore, measure 5 gauges the *public's attitude towards the USA making conditions difficult for undocumented immigrants to force them to return to their home country*.[7] The measure was coded as 0 representing the public agree and 1 representing the public disagree. Additionally, measure 6 gauges the *public's attitude towards police stop targeted at undocumented immigrants and immigrants with a criminal background*.[8] The measure was coded as a binary variable with 0 representing the public favor police stop targeted at undocumented immigrants and immigrants with a criminal background and 1 representing the public oppose police stops targeted at undocumented immigrants and immigrants with a criminal background. In conclusion, the six outcome variables gauge the public's attitude towards immigrants and immigration policies in the USA.

Predictor Variable

The predictor variable for the present study is *geopolitics–red and blue states* in the USA based on the 2016 presidential election results. We created a geopolitics variable using the presidential candidate that won the state electoral college votes for all the states in the USA in 2016. The geopolitics variable was coded as 0 representing blue states—states won by Clinton—and 1 representing red states—states won by Trump. We utilized only the 2016 presidential election results as opposed to historical election results because the majority of the outcome variables included in the

---

[4] **Q1c:** Passing laws to prevent refugees and immigrants from entering the U.S.

[5] **Q1d:** An immigration border policy that separates children from parents and charges parents as criminals when they enter the country without permission.

[6] **Q4a:** We should provide refugee and protection to all people who come to the U.S. when they are facing serious danger in their home country.

[7] **Q4c:** The best way to solve the country's illegal immigration problem is to make conditions so difficult for illegal immigrants that they return to their home country on their own.

[8] **Q1b:** Requiring police to check the criminality and immigration status of a person they have stopped or detained if they suspect the person of being in the country illegally: strongly favor, favor, oppose or strongly oppose.

present study happened under the Trump administration. Although we acknowledge that some of the outcome variables have historical bearing, analyzing the present data with a historical geopolitics measure was impossible and we contend it can significantly influence our findings. Overall, 29 states were coded as red states while 21 states were coded as blue states.[9]

Control Variables

We also controlled for the effect of several variables that can influence our understanding of public attitude towards immigrants and immigration policies in the USA. Gender (0=female and 1=male), age (18–94 years), region (1=Northeast, 2=North Central, 3=South, and 4=West), home ownership (0=owned and 1=rented). Registered voter (0=no and 1=yes), marital status (1=single/never married, 2=divorced/separated, 3=married, and 4=widowed), education (1=high school, 2=college, and 3=graduate school or more), race (1=Black, 2=White, 3=Asian, 4=Native American, Hawaiian, and Pacific Islanders, 5=Hispanic, and 6=mixed race/other races). Political party identification (1=Democrat, 2=independent, 3=Republican, and 4=others), sexual orientation (0=heterosexual/straight and 1=not heterosexual/ straight), rural–urban status (0=rural and 1=urban). Religious affiliation (1=no religion, 2=Christian, 3=Muslim/Islamic, 4=Buddhist/Hindu, 5=Jewish/Judaism, 6=other religions), employment status (0=employed and 1=unemployed), income (1=up to $24,999, 2=$25,000–$49,999, 3=$50,000–$100,000, and 4=$100,000 or more), trust in political institutions to handle immigration in the USA (1=trust in congress, 2=trust in Trump's presidency, and 3=no trust),[10] the USA as a good moral example for other countries in the world when it comes to immigration issues (0=agree and 1=disagree),[11] political ideology (1=conservative, 2=moderate, 3=liberal).

Plan of Analysis

To answer the research question for the present study, we conducted several analyses. First, we conducted a descriptive analysis to assess the distribution of scores for

---

[9] **Geopolitics variable:** Which political party won the state electoral votes during the 2016 presidential elections.

   Red states: Alaska (AK), Idaho (ID), Utah (UT), Arizona (AZ), Montana (MT), Wyoming (WY), North Dakota (NM), South Dakota (SD), Nebraska (NE), Kansas (KS), Oklahoma (OK), Texas (TX), Iowa (IA), Missouri (MO), Arkansas (AR), Louisiana (LA), Indiana (IN), Kentucky (KY), Tennessee (TN), Mississippi (MS), Wisconsin (WI), Ohio (OH), West Virginia (WV), North Carolina (NC), Alabama (AL), Michigan (MI), Pennsylvania (PA), South Carolina (SC), Georgia (GA), and Florida (FL).

   Blue states: Washington (WA), Oregon (OR), California (CA), Hawaii (HI), Nevada (NV), Colorado (CO), New Mexico (NM), Minnesota (MN), Illinois (IL), Virginia (VA), New York (NY), New Jersey (NJ), Maryland (MD), District of Columbia (DC), Vermont (VT), Massachusetts (MA), Connecticut (CT), Delaware (DE), Maine (ME), New Hampshire (NH), and Rhode Island (RI).

[10] **Q.3:** Who do you trust most to handle immigration issues? Democrats in Congress or Republicans in Congress or the Trump administration or None.

[11] **Q4b:** America today sets a good moral example for the world? Completely agree or mostly agree or completely disagree or mostly disagree.

the variables utilized in the present analysis. Second, we conducted a bivariate correlation analysis coupled with a collinearity test to check for the presence of multicollinearity between the study variables. Overall, results from both the bivariate and collinearity test showed no evidence of multicollinearity issues in the data. Third, we conducted a regression analysis to assess the effect of the predictor variable on the outcome variable. Specifically, we conducted a multivariate binary logistic regression.

Results

Descriptive Results

The descriptive results for the study variables are shown in Table 2. Public attitude towards laws and policies that separate parents from their children at the border (favor = 25%, opposed = 75%) had an average score of 0.75 and a standard deviation of 0.43. Public attitude towards the acceptance of refugees and immigrants facing danger in their home countries into the USA (agree = 76%, disagree = 24%) had an average score and standard deviation of 0.23 and 0.42, respectively. Public attitude towards policies that make conditions for undocumented immigrants so they return to their home countries (agree = 32%, disagree = 68%) had an average score of 0.67 and a standard deviation of 0.46. Public attitude towards building a wall against immigrants (favor = 37%, opposed = 63%) had an average score and a standard deviation of 0.63 and 0.48 respectively. Public attitude towards laws preventing immigrants from entering the USA (favor = 36%, oppose = 64%) had an average score of 0.64 and a standard deviation of 0.47. Public attitude towards police stop targeted at undocumented immigrants and immigrants with a criminal background (favor = 53%, oppose = 47%) had an average score and standard deviation of 0.47 and 0.49 respectively. The geopolitics variable–red or blue state (red states = 60% and blue states = 40%) had an average score of 0.60 and a standard deviation of 0.49 (Table 2).

The USA as a good moral example on immigration to other countries globally (agree = 43%, disagree = 57%). Trust in political institutions (Trump's presidency = 24.7%, Congress = 56.5%, none = 18.6%). The average age for the respondents was 53 years with a standard deviation of 19.1 for respondents aged 18–94 years surveyed. Rural–urban residency (rural = 25%, urban = 75%). Home ownership (rent = 29%, own home = 71%). Marital status (single = 27%, divorced/separated = 14%, widowed = 11%, married = 48%). Employment status (employed = 55%, unemployed = 45%). Education (high school = 32%, college = 50%, graduate school = 18%). Income ($24,999 and below = 21.8%, $25,000–$49,999 = 24.5%, $50,000–$99,000 = 29.9%, $100,000 + = 23.6%). Party affiliation (republican = 26.6%, democrat = 33.7%, independent = 38.4%, others = 1.34%). Race (White = 71.6%, Black = 12.5%, Hispanic = 6.6%, Native American = 2.8%, Asian = 2.1%, Mixed race/Others = 4.2%). Gender (female = 51%, male = 49%). Religion (Christian = 73.6%, Muslim = 0.6%, Buddhist = 1.4%, Judaism = 1.9%, others = 2.2%, no religion = 17.3%). Registered voter (no = 18%, yes = 82%). Sexual orientation (not heterosexual = 9%, heterosexual = 91%).

Table 2 Description of study variables ($N = 1018$)

Variables	N	M(SD)	Min	Max
Laws/policies that separate parents from their children at the border	957	.75(.43)	0	1
Accepting refugees and immigrants facing danger in their home countries in the USA	980	.23(.42)	0	1
Policies that make conditions difficult for undocumented immigrants so they return to their home countries	970	.67(.46)	0	1
Building walls against immigrants	967	.63(.48)	0	1
Laws preventing immigrants from entering the USA	911	.64(.47)	0	1
Police stops targeted at illegal immigrants and immigrants with a criminal background	964	.47(.49)	0	1
Geopolitics—red and blue states	1,018	.60(.49)	0	1
The USA as a good moral example on immigration to other countries globally	988	.57(.49)	0	1
Trust political institutions	932	1.93(.65)	1	3
Political ideology	965	2.07(.82)	1	3
Age	992	52.96(19.05)	18	94
Rural–urban residency	935	.74(.43)	0	1
Home ownership	997	.29(.45)	0	1
Marital status	1,002	1.80(1.29)	1	4
Employment status	1,009	.45(.49)	0	1
Educational status	1,007	1.82(.88)	1	3
Income	897	2.42(1.08)	1	4
Race	995	4.91(1.86)	1	6
Party ID	970	2.14(.82)	1	4
Registered voter	1,007	.82(.38)	0	1
Gender	1,018	.48(.50)	0	1
Religion	973	2.05(1.95)	1	6
Region	1,018	2.64(1.02)	1	4
Sexual orientation	1,018	.91(.28)	0	1

N represents number of observations; *M* represents the mean score or value; *SD* represents the standard deviation; *Min.* represents the minimum value; and *Max.* represents the maximum value

Region (Northeast = 18%, North Central = 22%, South = 37%, West = 23%) with an average score of 2.64 and a standard deviation of 1.02. Political ideology (conservative = 38.5%, liberal = 30.6%, moderate = 30.7%).

Predictors of Public Attitude Towards Immigrants and Immigration Policies in the USA

In the period between 2017 and 2021, the Trump administration introduced several laws, administrative restructuring, and policies to reshape US immigration. In this study, we examined six of these laws and policies. See Table 3 for a summary.

About 25% of the respondents favor laws and policies that separate parents from children at the border compared to 75% who opposed this policy. After estimating the effect of geopolitics on public attitude towards laws and policies that separate parents from children at the border while controlling for other variables, the model was significant ($F = 257.38$, $p < 0.001$) and explained a significant (36%) portion of variance in the data (see model I). After controlling for the effect of other variables in the model, the USA as a good moral example on immigration globally ($t = 3.53$, $p < 0.001$) with an odds ratio of 2.54, trust in Trump's presidency ($t = -3.60$, $p < 0.001$) with an odds ratio of 0.35, and political ideology, specifically, conservatives ($t = -3.28$, $p < 0.01$) with an odds ratio of 0.37 were found to be significant predictors of public attitude towards laws and policies that separate parents from children at the border in the USA. The present findings are consistent with previous findings about the factors that influence public attitude towards immigration policies and laws in the USA (see Pryce, 2018; McCann & Boateng, 2020).

Again, approximately 76% of the respondents agree to this policy while 24% disagree. After estimating the effect of geopolitics on public attitude towards accepting refugees and immigrants facing danger in their home countries in the USA while controlling for other variables, the model was significant ($F = 139.53$; $p < 0.001$) and explained 20% of the variance in the data (see model II). After controlling for the effect of other variables in the model, trust in Trump's presidency ($t = 2.53$, $p < 0.05$) with an odds ratio 1.92, trust in Congress ($t = -2.08$, $p < 0.05$) with an odds ratio of 0.48, and region–North Central ($t = -2.26$, $p < 0.05$) with an odds ratio of 0.43 were found to be significant predictors of public attitude towards accepting refugees and immigrants facing danger in their home countries in the USA.

Also, about 32% of the respondents agree to this policy while 68% disagree. After estimating the effect of geopolitics on public attitude towards making conditions difficult for undocumented immigrants so they return to their home country while controlling for other variables, the model was significant ($F = 184.30$; $p < 0.001$) and explained approximately 23% of variance in the data (see model III). After controlling for the effect of other variables in the model, the USA as a moral example on immigrant policy globally ($t = 4.42$, $p < 0.001$) with an odds ratio of 2.62, and political ideology–conservative ($t = -3.52$; $p < 0.001$) with an odds ratio of 0.41 were found to be significant predictors of public attitude towards making conditions difficult for undocumented immigrants, so they return to their home country (Table 4).

Table 3 Immigration policies and laws and their objectives

	Policies/laws	Act/date	Objective of the policy/law
1	Separate parents from children at the border	RAISE ACT of 2017 Cancellation of DACA in 2017 Trump Administration Family Policy in 2018	Separating minor children entering the USA from the parents or relatives that accompanied them, including people applying for asylum Young adults ("Dreamers") brought illegally into the USA as children to work legally without fear of deportation under President Obama was cancelled under President Trump
2	Accepting refugees and immigrants facing danger in their home countries in the USA	RAISE ACT of 2017	Imposes a cap of 50,000 refugees a year
3	Making conditions difficult for undocumented immigrants so they return to their home country	RAISE ACT of 2017 Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) & local law enforcement raids in 2019	Reduce the undocumented immigrant population
4	Building a wall against immigrants in the USA	RAISE ACT of 2017 & Executive Order 13,767 signed in 2017	Reduce the number of undocumented immigrants into the USA from neighboring countries especially Mexico
5	Preventing immigrants from entering the USA	RAISE ACT of 2017 Proclamation 9994 in 2020 (DNECNCD)	Seeks to abolish the Visa Diversity Lottery Suspension and limitation of immigrants into the USA
6	Police stops targeted at undocumented immigrants with criminal background	RAISE ACT of 2017 Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) & local law enforcement raids in 2019	Removal of undocumented immigrants through unannounced stops

NB:

Reforming American Immigration for a Strong Economy (RAISE) ACT

Declaring a National Emergency Concerning the Novel Coronavirus Disease (DNECNCD)

Deferred Action for Childhood Arrival (DACA)

Trump Administration Family Policy (TAFP)

Compiled by the authors

Furthermore, approximately, 37% of the respondents favor this policy while 63% disagree. After estimating the effect of geopolitics on public attitude towards building a wall against immigrants in the USA while controlling for other variables, the model was significant ($F = 441.92$; $p < 0.001$) and had 51% of the variance in the data (see model IV). After controlling for the effect of other variables in the model, the USA as a moral example on immigrant policy globally ($t = 3.35$, $p < 0.001$) with an odds ratio of 2.44, trust in Trump's presidency ($t = -7.70$, $p < 0.001$) with an odds ratio of 0.06, political ideology–conservative ($t = -3.36$, $p < 0.001$) with an odds ratio of 0.36, divorce ($t = 3.67$, $p < 0.001$) with an odds ratio of 0.17, republicans ($t = -2.23$, $p < 0.05$) with an odds ratio of 0.03, and North Central ($t = 2.38$, $p < 0.05$) with an odds ratio of 2.78 were found to be significant predictors of public attitude towards building a wall against immigrants in the USA.

Also, about 36% of the respondents favor laws preventing immigrants from entering and 64% oppose the policy. After estimating the effect of geopolitics on public attitude towards laws preventing immigrants from entering the USA while controlling for other variables, the model was significant ($F = 172.00$; $p < 0.001$) and explained about 21% of the variance in the data (see model V). After controlling for the effect of other variables in the model, the USA as a good moral example on immigration policy globally ($t = 2.40$, $p < 0.05$) with an odds ratio of 1.67, trust in Trump's presidency ($t = -2.69$, $p < 0.01$) with an odds ratio of 0.50, political ideology–conservative ($t = -3.18$, $p < 0.01$) with an odds ratio of 0.45, and respondents with an income of \$24,999 and below ($t = -2.53$, $p < 0.05$) with an odds ratio of 0.39 were found to be significant predictors of public attitude towards laws preventing immigrants from entering the USA.

Likewise, about 53% of the respondents' favor police stops targeted at undocumented immigrants with criminal background while 47% of the respondents' opposed police stops targeted at undocumented immigrants with criminal background. After estimating the effect of geopolitics and other variables on the outcome variable public attitude towards police stops targeted at undocumented immigrants with criminal background, the model was significant ($F = 256.74$; $p < 0.001$) and explained a significant portion (29%) of the variance in the data (see model VI). The model revealed that the USA as a moral example on immigration policy globally ($t = 2.62$, $p < 0.01$) with an odds ratio of 1.77, trust in Trump's presidency ($t = -4.13$, $p < 0.001$) with an odds ratio of 0.29, political ideology–liberals ($t = 2.59$, $p < 0.01$) with an odds ratio of 1.89, and conservatives ($t = -2.61$, $p < 0.01$) with an odds ratio of 0.52, and region–South ($t = -2.38$, $p < 0.05$) with an odds ratio of 0.44 were found to be significant predictors of public attitude towards police stops targeted at undocumented immigrants with criminal background in the USA. The existing literature is replete with similar findings (Table 5; see Provine & Sanchez, 2011; Dzordzormenyoh, 2022; Dzordzormenyoh & Perkins, 2022).

Discussion and Conclusion

Everywhere in the world, the topic of immigration (especially undocumented) becomes a controversial issue and evinces serious and intense debates (Boateng et al., 2021; Dzordzormenyoh & Perkins, 2022). However, in the USA, the controversy is more prevalent, and most people hold strong anti-immigration

Table 4 Effect of geopolitics and other variables on public attitude towards immigration policy (separating parents from children at the border/accepting refugees and immigrants facing danger in their home countries in the USA/ making conditions difficult for undocumented immigrants, so they return to their home country) in the USA

Variables	Model I		Model II		Model III	
	SE(OR)	t/F	SE(OR)	t/F	SE(OR)	t/F
Geopolitics–red and blue state	.27(.90)	− 0.33	.35(1.32)	1.03	.29(1.15)	0.57
The USA as a moral example	.67(2.54)	3.53***	.23(.96)	− 0.14	.57(2.62)	4.42***
Trust in political institutions[1]						
Trump's presidency	.10(.35)	− 3.60***	.49(1.92)	2.53*	.12(.48)	− 2.78***
Congress	.41(1.20)	0.54	.16(.48)	− 2.08*	.49(1.60)	1.53
Political ideology[2]						
Liberal	.61(1.58)	1.19	.26(.87)	− 0.44	.29(1.02)	0.09
Conservative	.11(.37)	− 3.28**	.30(1.11)	0.39	.10(.41)	− 3.52***
Age	.01(1.01)	1.18	.00(1.01)	1.91	.00(.98)	− 2.14*
Rural–urban residency	.44(1.59)	1.67	.29(1.14)	0.52	.17(.74)	− 1.24
Homeownership	.26(.79)	− 0.68	.33(1.19)	0.62	.38(1.40)	1.24
Marital status[3]						
Divorced	.25(.56)	− 1.27	.35(.93)	− 0.18	.46(1.28)	0.67
Widowed	.42(.77)	− 0.45	.20(.40)	− 1.82	.37(.85)	− 0.36
Married	.33(.86)	− 0.38	.28(.87)	− 0.41	.39(1.28)	0.82
Educational status[4]						
College	.17(.58)	− 1.75	.26(.99)	− 0.02	.25(1.01)	0.04
Graduate +	.22(.55)	− 1.44	.23(.65)	− 1.21	.48(1.44)	1.10
Employment	.40(1.27)	0.76	.32(1.16)	0.55	.20(.82)	− 0.76
Income[5]						
Up to $24,999	.32(.68)	− 0.80	.47(1.17)	0.39	.32(.84)	− 0.44
$25,000 − $49,999	.69(1.74)	1.40	.21(.58)	− 1.48	.45(1.35)	0.91
$50,000 − $100,000	.58(1.74)	1.67	.29(1.00)	0.02	.28(1.00)	0.00
Party identification[6]						
Republican	.38(.28)	− 0.93	7.65(43.24)	0.01	.46(.45)	− 0.77
Democrat	4.79(3.40)	0.87	9.59(54.22)	0.01	1.14(1.09)	0.09
Independent	.85(.63)	− 0.34	3.89(22.01)	0.01	.56(.54)	− 0.58
Race[7]						
White	.63(.47)	− 0.56	4.69(38.92)	0.01	1.17(1.42)	0.42
Black	.74(.53)	− 0.45	6.95(57.72)	0.01	1.02(1.18)	0.19
Hispanic	.93(.61)	− 0.32	4.99(41.43)	0.01	1.91(1.99)	0.72
Native America	.39(.26)	− 0.90	3.47(28.78)	0.01	1.95(1.88)	0.61
Mixed race	.33(.23)	− 1.01	3.45(28.67)	0.01	6.08(6.00)	1.77
Gender	.25(.96)	− 0.12	.33(1.44)	1.60	.18(.86)	− 0.69
Religion[8]						
Christianity	.56(1.56)	1.24	.37(1.15)	0.44	.35(1.15)	0.48
Islam	.53(1.45)	1.01	.34(1.12)	0.41	1.59(1.24)	0.17
Buddhism	(5.67)5.23	1.53	5.23(5.67)	1.53	.50(.49)	− 0.69

Table 4 (continued)

Variables	Model I		Model II		Model III	
	SE(OR)	t/F	SE(OR)	t/F	SE(OR)	t/F
Judaism	1.76(1.85)	0.65	.41(.36)	−0.88	1.18(1.49)	0.51
Other religion	17.65(12.64)	1.82	.63(.74)	−0.34	2.34(2.71)	1.16
Registered voter	.25(.64)	−1.11	.46(1.30)	0.76	.42(1.24)	0.65
Region[9]						
North Central	.64(1.61)	1.19	.16(.43)	−2.26*	.36(1.04)	0.13
South	.58(1.46)	0.96	.19(.56)	−1.62	.28(.85)	−0.46
West	.58(1.47)	0.97	.22(.66)	−1.20	.28(.86)	−0.43
Sexual orientation	.42(.64)	−0.67	1.67(2.57)	1.45	.70(1.58)	1.04
Constant	12.76(7.07)	1.08	1.11(5.19)	−0.02	4.16(3.02)	0.80
Log likelihood	−228.37		−284.14		−315.60	
LR statistic (37 df)	257.38		139.53		184.30	
Probability (LR stat)	0.0000		0.0000		0.0000	
R^2	0.3604		0.1971		0.2260	

*$p < 0.05$, **$p < 0.01$, ***$p < 0.001$. *SE*, standard error; *OR*, odds ratio

Reference categories: [1]no trust; [2]moderates; [3]single; [4]high school; [5]$100,000 + ; [6]other political parties; [7]Asian; [8]no religion; [9]North Central

Model I estimates the effect of geopolitics and other variables on public attitude towards laws and policies that separate parents from children at the border. *Model II* estimates the effect of geopolitics and other variables on public attitude towards accepting refugees and immigrants facing danger in their home countries in the USA. *Model III* estimates the effect of geopolitics and other variables on public attitude towards making conditions difficult for undocumented immigrants, so they return to their home country

sentiments. A significant number of Americans believe that immigration increases local crime rates or immigrants commit more crime (see McCann & Boateng, 2019, 2020; Passel & Rohal, 2015 for a review). This anti-immigration sentiment has led to the proliferation of immigration policies at both the federal and local levels to curtail the entrance of immigrants into the country. At the federal level, in recent times, the Trump administration issued a sweeping executive order to prevent citizens from certain countries from entering USA and also to reduce the number of legal immigrants. For instance, "executive order signed on January 27, 2017, prevented refugees from Syria from entering the U.S. indefinitely" (McCann & Boateng, 2020, p. 159). At the local level, several US cities have implemented or enacted policies and ordinances to address issues about immigration in their communities (Walker & Leitner, 2011). Whereas most of these policies are exclusionary in nature and aim to prevent or limit immigration, a few of such policies are largely inclusionary such as the sanctuary policies implemented by cities like San Francisco and others. The primary purpose of this paper is not to survey local or federal immigration policies in the USA but to examine, from the citizens' perspective, what influences support for immigration policies.

Public support for immigration-related policies and laws—whether anti or pro—is a complex phenomenon to study and understand. The complexity is because immigration itself is a complex concept and has several dimensions.

Table 5 Effect of geopolitics and other variables on public attitude towards immigration policy (building a wall against immigrants/preventing immigrants from entering the USA/police stops targeted at undocumented immigrants and immigrants with a criminal background) in the USA

Variables	model IV		model V		model V	
	SE(OR)	t/F	SE(OR)	t/F	SE(OR)	t/F
Geopolitics–red and blue state	.30(.91)	− 0.26	.24(.92)	− 0.29	.36(1.31)	1.01
The USA as a moral example	.65(2.44)	3.35***	.36(1.67)	2.40*	.38(1.77)	2.62**
Trust in political institutions[1]						
Trump's presidency	.02(.06)	− 7.70***	.12(.50)	− 2.69**	.08(.29)	− 4.13***
Congress	.26(.79)	− 0.68	.32(1.11)	0.36	.23(.84)	− 0.62
Political ideology[2]						
Liberal	.65(1.81)	1.65	.45(1.67)	1.89	.47(1.89)	2.59**
Conservative	.10(.36)	− 3.36***	.11(.45)	− 3.18**	.13(.52)	− 2.61**
Age	.01(.99)	− 0.16	.00(1.00)	0.04	.00(.99)	− 1.25
Rural–urban residency	.35(1.18)	0.55	.35(1.55)	1.92	.28(1.18)	0.72
Homeownership	.76(2.21)	2.30*	.36(1.37)	1.20	.28(1.10)	0.39
Marital status[3]						
Divorced	.08(.17)	− 3.67***	.37(1.02)	0.07	.27(.79)	− 0.66
Widowed	.36(.62)	− 0.81	.52(1.21)	0.45	.34(.78)	− 0.56
Married	.20(.49)	− 1.71	.20(.68)	− 1.27	.24(.83)	− 0.61
Educational status[4]						
College	.24(.75)	− 0.87	.28(1.17)	0.65	.29(1.17)	0.65
Graduate +	.39(.88)	− 0.27	.47(1.40)	1.01	.38(1.14)	0.39
Employment	.36(1.13)	0.39	.20(.83)	− 0.74	.22(.91)	− 0.34
Income[5]						
Up to $24,999	.32(.63)	− 0.87	.14(.39)	− 2.53*	.44(1.14)	0.36
$25,000 – $49,999	.40(.95)	− 0.11	.32(1.00)	0.02	.44(1.32)	0.85
$50,000 – $100,000	.37(1.04)	0.12	.40(1.43)	1.28	.37(1.30)	0.92
Party identification[6]						
Republican	.04(.03)	− 2.23*	1.00(.96)	− 0.03	.33(.34)	− 1.10
Democrat	.45(.28)	− 0.79	2.46(2.35)	0.81	1.47(1.52)	0.43
Independent	.16(.10)	− 1.45	1.65(1.59)	0.45	.84(.88)	− 0.13
Race[7]						
White	1.00(.83)	− 0.15	.54(.58)	− 0.58	.42(.50)	− 0.81
Black	1.54(1.23)	0.17	.70(.73)	− 0.33	.31(.36)	− 1.15
Hispanic	.99(.73)	− 0.23	.47(.46)	− 0.75	1.33(1.37)	0.33
Native America	1.18(.84)	− 0.12	.60(.54)	− 0.55	1.16(1.10)	0.09
Mixed race	2.84(2.10)	0.55	.55(.54)	− 0.60	.39(.38)	− 0.93
Gender	.16(.59)	− 1.85	.19(.93)	− 0.34	.16(.77)	− 1.18
Religion[8]						
Christianity	.35(.96)	− 0.10	.40(1.41)	1.21	.32(1.11)	0.38
Islam	.29(.98)	0.13	.39(1.21)	1.10	.30(1.13)	0.35

Table 5 (continued)

Variables	model IV		model V		model V	
	SE(OR)	t/F	SE(OR)	t/F	SE(OR)	t/F
Buddhism	8.66(4.09)	0.67	3.98(3.18)	0.93	.54(.53)	− 0.62
Judaism	1.33(1.49)	0.45	.55(.83)	− 0.27	1.05(1.53)	0.62
Other religion	6.44(5.74)	1.56	1.60(2.10)	0.97	.41(.64)	− 0.68
Registered voter	.40(.95)	− 0.10	.32(1.03)	0.11	.44(1.42)	1.14
Region[9]						
North Central	1.19(2.78)	2.38*	.26(.76)	− 0.79	.25(.71)	− 0.95
South	.76(1.84)	1.46	.37(1.09)	0.27	.15(.44)	− 2.38*
West	.66(1.60)	1.15	.30(.92)	− 0.24	.25(.78)	− 0.75
Sexual orientation	.34(.43)	− 1.05	.33(.76)	− 0.61	.19(.39)	− 1.86
Constant	215.85(109.93)	2.39	2.47(1.77)	0.41	8.47(6.29)	1.37
Log likelihood	− 210.12		− 322.97		− 321.65	
LR statistic (37 df)	441.92		172.00		256.74	
Probability (LR stat)	0.0000		0.0000		0.0000	
R^2	0.5126		0.2103		0.2853	

*$p < 0.05$, **$p < 0.01$, ***$p < 0.001$. *SE*, standard error; *OR*, odds ratio

Reference categories: [1]no trust; [2]moderates; [3]single; [4]high school; [5]$100,000 + ; [6]other political parties; [7]Asian; [8]no religion; [9]North Central

Model IV estimates the effect of geopolitics and other variables on public attitude towards building a wall against immigrants. *Model V* estimates the effect of geopolitics and other variables on public attitude towards laws preventing immigrants from entering the USA. *Model VI* estimates the effect of geopolitics and other variables on public attitude towards police stops targeted at undocumented immigrants and immigrants with a criminal background

Also, understanding public support is difficult because of the multiplexity of variables that affect citizens' support. However, the few available studies on this issue have observed the importance of geographical location in shaping attitudes toward immigration policies (Haubert & Fussell, 2006; Walker & Leitner, 2011; Winders, 2007). These studies have observed a statistically significant relationship between location and anti-immigration policy attitudes, arguing that such attitudes are more common in the South than in other regions of the USA. In our multivariate analysis, we observed a limited effect of geography on Americans' support for immigration policies because, of the three geography-related variables included in the analysis, only one had some influence. Specifically, we did not find any effect for geopolitics on whether citizens will support or oppose any of the five immigration-related policies we examined. This observation implies that citizens in red and blue states do not differ in terms of their support. While this observation contradicts the notion that because blue states tend to have more positive views about immigration, people in that states may support pro-immigration policies than those in red states, it raises questions about the complexities and diversities that exist in the various states and the need to accommodate such uniqueness. There may be other factors that citizens may consider beyond simply

living in a red or blue state or voting for a republican or democrat candidate. Factors such as the socio-economic conditions of the state and individuals may weigh heavily on people's decision than just geopolitics.

Also, despite the literature observing the rural–urban effect, our analysis failed to make such observation. Prior studies suggest that rural folks in the USA tend to support restrictive immigration policies than their city folks, because they are likely to hold negative views about multiculturalism. The intergroup contact hypothesis, which argues that public interactions and contacts with immigrants have a positive effect on the citizens' attitudes, may better explain why some scholars think rural folks tend to support restrictive immigration policies. Historically, immigrants are less likely to reside in rural areas due to the lack of or limited social and economic opportunities (McCann & Boateng, 2020). This reduces the number of immigrants in such areas and further limits native-born interactions with immigrants. Hence, according to this line of reasoning, rural residents will end up supporting anti-immigration policies than city residents who are likely to have increased contact with foreign-born citizens. Although this argument is impressive, we did not see any difference between the two groups with regard to the six immigration policies examined.

The only geographical variable that we found predicting support for immigration policies was the regional variable. That is, regional location is important in understanding people's decision to support or oppose an immigration policy. Specifically, we observed that people in North Central tend to have favorable attitudes toward immigration policies compared to those in Northeast. These people are likely to oppose policies or laws that aim to ban immigration into USA as well as those that separate children from their parents. However, comparatively, Southern states tend to support policies that empower police officers to target undocumented immigrants in the communities than the Northeastern states. This observation offers credence to the prior argument that Southerners were more likely to hold negative views about immigrants due to certain unique characteristics of the South, such as their past legacies of racism and segregation (Haubert & Fussell, 2006).

Politics, for long, has been considered as an important factor in shaping public opinion about immigration and immigration-related policies (MacDonald, 2021). For example, it has been widely argued that ideological preferences of political parties as well as party affiliation of people play a critical role in public support. Liberals tend to hold favorable attitudes toward pro-immigration policies than their conservative colleagues. In this study, while we did not compare liberals to conservatives, we still observed the significant role of politics in forming attitudes toward immigration policies. Compared to moderates, liberals are more likely to oppose policies that allow police officers to target undocumented immigrants in the communities. Apart from this specific policy, there was no difference in terms of other policies. However, conservatives are more likely to support restrictive immigration policies than the moderates. That is, policies such as those related to border wall, banning of immigrants, separation of children from parents, not accepting refugees into the USA, and policies that make conditions for undocumented immigrants difficult as well as those that allow the police to target undocumented immigrants are likely to receive conservatives' support than moderates' support. This conclusion supports the notion that conservatives are philosophically anti-immigration, hold negative feelings about

immigrants, and do not want immigrants in the USA. In addition to political ideology, we found that party identification is also important, with self-identified republicans agreeing with or supporting policies that prevent refugees from coming to the USA. This finding is important because it validates the ideological effects discussed earlier and also gives sense of what policies republicans make or are likely to implement when they are in government.

Past research has found demographic effects on public opinion about immigration and support for immigration-related policies. These studies believe that support and attitudes vary across characteristics such as race, education, income, gender, age, class status, or unemployment (Burns & Gimpel, 2000; Chandler & Tsai, 2001; Coenders et al., 2008; Hainmueller & Hopkins, 2014; Haubert & Fussell, 2006; Mayda, 2006; Neal & Bohon, 2003; O'Rourke & Sinnott, 2006). The observation is that individuals that are older, possess low socio-economic capital, are less educated, are in working class, and are unemployed tend to express strong anti-immigration sentiments and are less likely to support pro-immigration-related policies. While we did not observe effect for some of these variables, we found that age, marital status, and income strongly influence support for immigration policies. Specifically, older people are more likely to disagree with policies that aim to separate children from parents whereas married people are less likely to support policies that prevent refugees from entering into USA. The low-income earners (those earning $24,999 or less) tend to express favorable attitudes toward immigration policies than the high-income earners (those earning above $100 k). These low-income earners are more likely to oppose policies that aim to make the life of undocumented immigrants unbearable. This observation and behavior are surprising, given the position of prior studies on this relationship. Proponents of the instrumental group conflict theory suggest that fear of economic competition from immigrants enhances anti-immigration sentiments among the natives, especially the poor and uneducated segments of the US population (Dzordzormenyoh & Perkins, 2022; McCann & Boateng, 2020).

The present study, like most empirical studies, have some limitations worth mentioning. First, the results presented above are based on analysis of survey data which sometimes have desirability bias—survey respondents adjusting their answers during interviews and surveys to appear credible which might not necessarily reflect their actual deposition. Desirability bias as a weakness of survey data can affect the current results; and therefore, we caution readers against further interpretation of the results presented in this study. Second, the geopolitics variable utilized in the present study examines only one election cycle—2106—which limits our ability to ascertain the actual influence of this variable on public support for immigration politics in the USA. We were also cautious in ensuring that the immigration issues considered correlated with the time of the geopolitics variable used in the present study. Future studies can examine the effect of geopolitics on immigration from a historical perspective and also adopt longer time frames to aid our understanding of the topic.

Despite the above study's limitations, our findings have implications for both research and policy development. In terms of research, our findings extend the literature on immigration by exploring how citizens perceive immigration policies. This is a significant contribution to the literature since the majority of the attitudinal

studies have focused exclusively on understanding anti-immigration sentiments and how citizens form their views about immigrants. Also, some of these studies have focused on understanding the immigration-crime relationship. By examining public support for immigration policies, we fill in gaps in the existing literature. Practically, our findings are useful for developing immigration policies that are based not on sentiments but on empirical evidence.

Declarations

Conflict of Interest The authors declare no competing interests.

References

Alba, R. D., & Nee, V. (2003). *Remaking the American mainstream assimilation and contemporary immigration*. Harvard University Press. https://doi.org/10.4159/9780674020115

Allen, R., & Goetz, E. G. (2021). A home for xenophobia: U.S. public housing policy under Trump. *International Journal of Housing Policy, 21*(1), 127–137. https://doi.org/10.1080/19491247.2020.1803533

Bessett, D., Gerdts, C., Littman, L. L., Kavanaugh, M. L., & Norris, A. (2015). Does state-level context matter for individuals' knowledge about abortion, legality and health? Challenging the "red states v. blue states" hypothesis. *Culture, Health & Sexuality, 17*(6), 733–746. https://doi.org/10.1080/13691058.2014.994230

Boateng, F. D., Pryce, D. K., & Chenane, J. L. (2021). I may be an immigrant, but I am not a criminal: Examining the association between the presence of immigrants and crime rates in Europe. *Journal of International Migration and Integration, 22*(3), 1105–1124.

Bowling, B., & Westenra, S. (2017). Racism, immigration, and policing. In M. Bosworth, A. Parmar, & Y. Vázquez (Eds.), *Race, criminal justice and migration control: Enforcing the boundaries of belonging* (pp. 61–77). Oxford University Press.

Braaten, D., & Braaten, C. N. (2021). Children seeking asylum: Determinants of asylum claims by unaccompanied minors in the United States from 2013 to 2017. *Law & Policy, 43*(2), 97–125. https://doi.org/10.1111/lapo.12165

Brown, R. K., & Brown, R. E. (2017). Race, religion, and immigration policy attitudes. *Race and Social Problems, 9*(1), 4–18. https://doi.org/10.1007/s12552-017-9201-5

Burns, P., & Gimpel, J. G. (2000). Economic insecurity, prejudicial stereotypes, and public opinion on immigration policy. *Political Science Quarterly, 115*(2), 201–225.

Ceobanu, A. M., & Escandell, X. (2008). East is West? National feelings and anti-immigrant sentiment in Europe. *Social Science Research, 37*(4), 1147–1170. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ssresearch.2008.01.002

Chandler, C. R., & Tsai, Y. M. (2001). Social factors influencing immigration attitudes: An analysis of data from the General Social Survey. *The Social Science Journal, 38*(2), 177–188.

Chenane, J. L., & Wright, E. M. (2021). The Role of police officer race/ethnicity on crime rates in immigrant communities. *Race and Justice, 11*(1), 3–27. https://doi.org/10.1177/2153368718777278

Coenders, M., Lubbers, M., & Scheepers, P. (2008). Support for repatriation policies of migrants: Comparisons across and explanations for European countries. *International Journal of Comparative Sociology, 49*(2–3), 175–194.

Crisp, R. J., & Turner, R. N. (2013). Imagined intergroup contact: Refinements, debates, and clarifications. In G. Hodson & M. Hewstone (Eds.), *Advances in intergroup contact.* Psychology Press.

Davis, L., & Deole, S. (2015). Immigration, attitudes, and the rise of the political right: The role of cultural and economic concerns over immigration. Retrieved September 16, 2021, from https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=2727101. Accessed 24 Oct 2021.

Davisson, A. (2011). Beyond the borders of red and blue states: Google Maps as a site of rhetorical invention in the 2008 presidential election. *Rhetoric & Public Affairs, 14*(1), 101–123. https://doi.org/10.1353/rap.2011.0005

Dixon, J., Durrheim, K., & Tredoux, C. (2007). Intergroup contact and attitudes toward the principle and practice of racial equality. *Psychological Science, 18*(10), 867–872. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-9280.2007.01993.x

Docquier, F., Rapoport, H., & Salomone, S. (2012). Remittances, migrants' education and immigration policy: Theory and evidence from bilateral data. *Regional Science and Urban Economics, 42*(5), 817–828. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.regsciurbeco.2011.10.005

Dzordzormenyoh, M. K. (2022). Fear of immigrants, support for exclusionary immigration policies & police stops against illegal immigrants with a criminal background in the US. *Migration & Diversity, 1*(1), 41–57.

Dzordzormenyoh, M. K., & Perkins, D. (2022). Immigration in the United States: Exploring the factors that predict public support for police stops targeted at illegal immigrants & immigrants with criminal background. *Journal of International Migration and Integration, 23*(3), 1545–1566.

Feldmeyer, B. (2009). Immigration and violence: The offsetting effects of immigrant concentration on Latino violence. *Social Science Research, 38*(3), 717–731. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ssresearch.2009.03.003

Finley, L., & Esposito, L. (2020). The immigrant as bogeyman: Examining Donald Trump and the right's anti-immigrant Anti-PC Rhetoric. *Humanity & Society, 44*(2), 178–197. https://doi.org/10.1177/0160597619832627

Florack, A., Piontkowski, U., Rohmann, A., Balzer, T., & Perzig, S. (2003). Perceived intergroup threat and attitudes of host community members toward immigrant acculturation. *The Journal of Social Psychology, 143*(5), 633–648. https://doi.org/10.1080/00224540309598468

Garcia, C., & Davidson, T. (2013). Are rural people more anti-immigrant than urban people? A comparison of attitudes toward immigration in the United States. *Journal of Rural Social Sciences, 28*(1), 4–30. https://egrove.olemiss.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1448&context=jrss. Accessed: Oct. 24, 2021.

Giuliano, P., & Tabellini, M. (2020). *The seeds of ideology: Historical immigration and political preferences in the United States* (No. w27238). National Bureau of Economic Research. Retrieved September 16, 2021, from https://www.nber.org/papers/w27238. https://doi.org/10.3386/w27238. Accessed 24 Oct 2021.

Glass, J., & Levchak, P. (2014). Red states, blue states, and divorce: Understanding the impact of conservative Protestantism on regional variation in divorce rates. *American Journal of Sociology, 119*(4), 1002–1046. https://www.journals.uchicago.edu/doi/pdfplus/10.1086/674703?casa_token=ZTf-4MSp92kAAAAA:eaeGxrGP07nML89VMAjjDmMErmv6qsJdKRcAZM6HBIa-cePLxG7lRan8RY1Ne3PAu3mX58_WmAjlkA. Accessed: Oct. 24, 2021.

Goodman, A. (2017). The long history of self-deportation: Trump's anti-immigrant policies build on more than a century of attempts to create fear and terror within U.S. immigrant communities. *NACLA Report on the Americas (1993), 49*(2), 152–158. https://doi.org/10.1080/10714839.2017.1331811

Gorodzeisky, A., & Semyonov, M. (2016). Not only competitive threat but also racial prejudice: Sources of anti-immigrant attitudes in European societies. *International Journal of Public Opinion Research, 28*(3), 331–354. https://doi.org/10.1093/ijpor/edv024

Haaland, I., & Roth, C. (2020). Labor market concerns and support for immigration. *Journal of Public Economics, 191*, 104256. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jpubeco.2020.104256

Hainmueller, J., & Hopkins, D. J. (2014). Public attitudes toward immigration. *Annual Review of Political Science, 17*, 225–249.

Haubert, J., & Fussell, E. (2006). Explaining pro-immigrant sentiment in the US: Social class, cosmopolitanism, and perceptions of immigrants. *International Migration Review, 40*(3), 489–507.

Hébert, Y., Sun, X. S., & Kowch, E. (2004). Focusing on children and youth: The role of social capital in educational outcomes in the context of immigration and diversity. *Journal of International Migration and Integration, 5*(2), 229–249. https://doi.org/10.1007/s12134-004-1011-0

Isaacs, A., Burns, N., Macdonald, S., & O'Donnell, C. A. (2020). 'I don't think there's anything I can do which can keep me healthy': How the UK immigration and asylum system shapes the health & wellbeing of refugees and asylum seekers in Scotland. *Critical Public Health,* 1–11.

Kilty, K. M., & de Haymes, M. V. (2000). Racism, nativism, and exclusion: Public policy, immigration, and the Latino experience in the United States. *Journal of Poverty, 4*(1–2), 1–25. https://doi.org/10.1300/J134v04n01_01

Knoll, B. R. (2009). "And who is my neighbor?" Religion and immigration policy attitudes. *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion, 48*(2), 313–331. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1468-5906.2009.01449.x

Kudrle, R. T. (2003). Hegemony strikes out: The U.S. global role in antitrust, tax evasion, and illegal immigration. *International Studies Perspectives, 4*(1), 52–71. https://doi.org/10.1111/1528-3577.04104

Lee, Y.-T., Ottati, V., & Hussain, I. (2001). Attitudes toward "illegal" immigration into the United States: California Proposition 187. *Hispanic Journal of Behavioral Sciences, 23*(4), 430–443. https://doi.org/10.1177/0739986301234005

Levendusky, M. S., & Pope, J. C. (2011). Red states vs blue states: Going beyond the mean. *Public Opinion Quarterly, 75*(2), 227–248. https://doi.org/10.1093/poq/nfr002

Lichter, D. T. (2012). Immigration and the new racial diversity in rural America. *Rural Sociology, 77*(1), 3–35. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1549-083l.2012.00070.x

Light, M. T., & Miller, T. (2018). Does undocumented immigration increase violent crime? *Criminology (beverly Hills), 56*(2), 370–401. https://doi.org/10.1111/1745-9125.12175

MacDonald, D. (2021). Political trust and support for immigration in the American mass public. *British Journal of Political Science, 51*(4), 1402–1420. https://doi.org/10.1017/S0007123419000668

Major, B., Blodorn, A., & Major Blascovich, G. (2018). The threat of increasing diversity: Why many White Americans support Trump in the 2016 presidential election. *Group Processes & Intergroup Relations, 21*(6), 931–940. https://doi.org/10.1177/1368430216677304

Manley, E. (2017). Building an uncertain empire?: The U.S. politics of hegemony in the early twentieth century. *Reviews in American History, 45*(2), 275–280. https://doi.org/10.1353/rah.2017.0039

May, A. M., & McGarvey, M. G. (2017). Gender, occupational segregation, and the cultural divide: Are red states different than blue states? *The Review of Regional Studies, 47*(2), 175–199. https://doi.org/10.52324/001c.8022

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.

Mayda, A. M., Steingress, W., & Peri, G. (2018). *The Political Impact of Immigration: Evidence from the United States.* https://doi.org/10.3386/w24510

McCann, W. S., & Boateng, F. D. (2019). *National security and policy in America: Immigrants, crime, and the securitization of the border*. Routledge.

McCann, W. S., & Boateng, F. D. (2020). An examination of American perceptions of the immigrant-crime relationship. *American Journal of Criminal Justice, 45*(6), 973–1002. https://doi.org/10.1007/s12103-020-09528-2

McCann, W. S., Zhang, S., & Boateng, F. D. (2021). Immigrants, crime, and the American dream: Testing a segmented assimilation theory of crime. *International Journal of Offender Therapy and Comparative Criminology, 66*(5), 560–586. https://doi.org/10.1177/0306624X21994061

McKanders, K. M. (2018). Immigration to blue cities in red states: The battleground between sanctuary and exclusion. *U. Pa. J. Const. L.*, *21*, 1051. https://heinonline.org/HOL/LandingPage?handle=hein.journals/upjcl21&div=36&id=&page=. Accessed: Oct. 24, 2021.

McLaren, L. (2017). Immigration, national identity and political trust in European democracies. *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies, 43*(3), 379–399. https://doi.org/10.1080/1369183X.2016.1197772

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

Miller, P. R., & Conover, P. J. (2015). Red and blue states of mind: Partisan hostility and voting in the United States. *Political Research Quarterly, 68*(2), 225–239. https://doi.org/10.1177/1065912915577208

Neal, M., & Bohon, S. (2003). The Dixie diaspora: Attitudes toward immigrants in Georgia. *Sociological Spectrum, 23*(2), 181–212.

Nivola, P. S., & Brady, D. W. (2007). *Red and blue nation?: Characteristics and causes of America's polarized politics*. Brookings Institution Press. https://doi.org/10.7864/j.ctt6wpfdr

O'rourke, K. H., & Sinnott, R. (2006). The determinants of individual attitudes towards immigration. *European Journal of Political Economy, 22*(4), 838–861.

Passel, J., & Rohal, M. (2015). Modern immigration wave brings 59 million to US, driving population growth and change through 2065. Pew Research Center. https://www.issuelab.org/resources/23118/23118.pdf. Accessed 24 Oct 2021.

Provine, D. M., & Sanchez, G. (2011). Suspecting immigrants: Exploring links between racialised anxieties and expanded police powers in Arizona. *Policing & Society, 21*(4), 468–479. https://doi.org/10.1080/10439463.2011.614098

Pryce, D. K. (2018). U.S. citizens' current attitudes toward immigrants and immigration: A study from the General Social Survey. *Social Science Quarterly, 99*(4), 1467–1483. https://doi.org/10.1111/ssqu.12514

Rocha, R. R., Knoll, B. R., & Wrinkle, R. D. (2015). Immigration enforcement and the redistribution of political trust. *The Journal of Politics, 77*(4), 901–913. https://doi.org/10.1086/681810

Rodden, J. (2005). Red states, blue states, and the welfare state: Political geography, representation, and government policy around the world. *Typescript, Department of Political Science, MIT*. https://web.mit.edu/jrodden/www/materials/rodden_michigan_dec05.pdf. Accessed: Oct. 24, 2021.

Sampson, R. J. (2008). Moving to inequality: Neighborhood effects and experiments meet social structure. *The American Journal of Sociology, 114*(1), 189–231. https://doi.org/10.1086/589843

Sampson, R. J., & Bean, L. (2006). Cultural mechanisms and killing fields: A revised theory of community-level racial inequality. In R. D. Peterson, L. J. Krivo, & J. Hagan (Eds.), *The many colors of crime: Inequalities of race, ethnicity and crime in America* (pp. 8–36). New York University Press.

Sanders, L., & Heineman, E. (2020). German Iowa and the Global Midwest: Discussing immigration and xenophobia in the Trump Era. *The Public Historian, 42*(1), 98–125. https://doi.org/10.1525/tph.2020.42.1.98

Schlueter, E., & Scheepers, P. (2010). The relationship between outgroup size and anti-outgroup attitudes: A theoretical synthesis and empirical test of group threat- and intergroup contact theory. *Social Science Research, 39*(2), 285–295. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ssresearch.2009.07.006

Stangor, C., Jonas, K., Stroebe, W., & Hewstone, M. (1996). Influence of student exchange on national stereotypes, attitudes and perceived group variability. *European Journal of Social Psychology, 26*(4), 663–675. https://doi.org/10.1002/(SICI)1099-0992(199607)26:4%3c663::AID-EJSP778%3e3.0.CO;2-6

Stanhope, K. K., Hogue, C. R., Suglia, S. F., Leon, J. S., & Kramer, M. R. (2019). Restrictive sub-federal immigration policy climates and very preterm birth risk among US-born and foreign-born Hispanic mothers in the United States, 2005–2016. *Health & Place, 60*, 102209–102209. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.healthplace.2019.102209

Walker, K. E., & Leitner, H. (2011). The variegated landscape of local immigration policies in the United States. *Urban Geography, 32*(2), 156–178.

Winders, J. (2007). Bringing back the (b)order: Post 9/11 politics of immigration, borders, and belonging in the contemporary U.S South. *Antipode, 39*, 920–942.