

**THE IMPACT OF GENERATIONAL EXPERIENCES ON
ANTI-IMMIGRATION SENTIMENTS**

by

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ABSTRACT

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Immigration is one of the most important issues in our increasingly globalized world. Every year, millions of people relocate to Europe and United States in an effort to improve the quality of life for themselves and their family. With this increase in immigration, there has been an emergence of anti-immigration sentiments which have in turn allowed far right political parties to gain more power, evident in the British referendum to leave the European Union and Donald Trump's election as President of the United States. While most works of literature look at the current work status, education level and income of an individual in explaining how anti-immigration sentiments occur, I want to look in more detail at the generational factors that cause individuals to think this way.

Within *The Moral Consequences of Economic Growth*, Benjamin Friedman offers a theory that people constitute their happiness on comparing it to "benchmark of their own prior experiences or their parents". Thus when they believe that their own lives are better, they feel less need to get ahead and they develop a more open view towards immigrants. Building off of Friedman's argument, I ran regressions using GSS data together with several control variable, to see if Friedman's argument that anti-immigration sentiments rise as a product of generational experiences rather than based on current socio-economic status, explains the rise that we have seen in anti-immigration sentiments. Our results supported some of Friedman's theory that

individuals who receive a higher education and make more money than their parents are more tolerant to immigrants however it also revealed that generational changes do not reflect the entire story as some generational variables had no impact on our dependent variable.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Immigration has become one of the most important issues in an increasingly globalized world. Every year, millions of people relocate to Europe and United States in an effort to improve the quality of life for themselves and their family. This increase in immigration has caused major policy changes for European and North American countries as they attempt to deal with the rapid influx of new people within their border. As a result, there has been an emergence of anti-immigration sentiments which have in turn allowed far right political parties to gain more power. This is evident in the British referendum to leave the European Union and Donald Trump's election as President of the United States. With there being so much backlash against allowing immigrants into the country, it is important to look at what factors are causing people to be so strongly opposed to immigration.

Within *The Moral Consequences of Economic Growth*, Benjamin Friedman offers a theory for why anti-immigration sentiments arise. Friedman argues that people are more inclined to be generous or tolerant towards immigrants when they are getting ahead. People constitute their happiness on comparing it to “benchmark of their own prior experiences or their parents” (Friedman 2005, pg 72). Thus when they believe that their own lives, as well their children's lives, are better, they consequently feel less need to get ahead and they develop a more open view towards immigrants. By continually giving people a sense of living better than they or their families have in the past, “sustained growth reduces the intensity of their desire to live better than one another” (Friedman 2005, pg 75). Once the growth stops however, no matter how

people's income have risen, it is only a matter of time before habits adapt and the sense of heightened well being disappears. When the economy stagnates, the importance people attach to living better than others who they compare themselves to becomes more intense and that feeling of openness and generosity decreases.

In this way, Benjamin Friedman argues that anti-immigration sentiments rise as a product of generational experiences rather than based on current socio-economic status (Friedman 2005, pg 123). The implication for that is people take on certain basic attitudes in young adulthood, depending in large part on the economic conditions they experience in these formative years, and they retain those attitudes throughout the remainder of their lives. During times of economic stagnation, people who feel that they are living no better, or not much better, than their parents will search for enemies. As a result, antipathy towards immigrants surfaces with natives looking to blame immigrants and immigration as the primary factors in causing economic distress. This negative mentality and expectations can pass through generations causing anti-immigration sentiments to increase. Once individuals have formed their basic attitudes about such matters, they are normally very slow to change them even after an economy has begun to grow again.

With many works of literature confirming the idea that anti-immigration sentiments increase during times of economic downturns, I want to look in more detail at the generational factors that cause individuals to think this way. Building off of Friedman's argument regarding the negative feeling towards immigrants arising from generation to generation, I want to explore how an individual's past experiences and history impacts their mentality towards immigrants and immigration. With immigration being one of the most important issues in today's world I feel this is an important topic to look at in further detail. As a result of the Great Britain's exit from the

EU and Trump's election win, other countries such as Brazil, France and Germany have all experienced a rise in support for far right political parties. This indicates that anti-immigration sentiments are on the rise thus it is important to research the factors that are impacting this change in behavior. As well, the results from this paper could have important implications for public policy as it reveals that although economic growth has been occurring in America, the growth has not been equally distributed. This would suggest that future policies should focus on redistribution in order to stop the rise of inequality that has been prevalent within the United States.

CHAPTER II

OVERVIEW OF U.S IMMIGRATION HISTORY

The United States has been the top destination for international migrants since 1960, with one-fifth of the world's migrants living there as of 2017 (Zong, Batalova, Hallock 2018, pg). More than 43.7 million immigrants resided in the United States in 2016, accounting for 13.5 percent of the total U.S. population of 323.1 million, according to American Community Survey (ACS) data. Between 2015 and 2016, the foreign-born population increased by about 449,000, or 1 percent, a rate slower than the 2.1 percent growth experienced between 2014 and 2015 (Zong, Batalova, Hallock 2018). Data on the nativity of the U.S. population were first collected in 1850. That year, there were 2.2 million immigrants, representing nearly 10 percent of the U.S. population. Between 1860 and 1920, the immigrant share of the overall population fluctuated between 13 percent and almost 15 percent, peaking at 14.8 percent in 1890, mainly due to high levels of immigration from Europe. Due to restrictive immigration laws in 1921 and 1924, along with the Great Depression and World War II, there was a sharp drop in new arrivals. As a result,

the foreign-born share steadily declined, hitting a record low of approximately 5 percent in 1970. Since then, the immigration population has quadrupled reaching 43.7 million in 2016.

CHAPTER III

THEORIES FOR OPPOSITION AGAINST IMMIGRATION

With immigration being such a debated topic in global politics, it is important to look at the theories that impact public opinion towards immigration. Immigration affects the domestic landscapes of receiving countries in different ways and there are numerous studies that use different theoretical explanations for the evolvment of anti-immigration sentiments. The theories I will look at are group threat theory, competitive threat theory, social identity threat, social salience and contact theory.

Group Threat Theory

According to the group threat model, presence of an outgroup population prompts fear of competition over resources. Fear of competition, in turn, is likely to increase prejudice and hostility toward the outgroup population. Threat or fear of competition over resources is a major source of anti-immigrant sentiments and their longitudinal change (Kuntz et al. 2017, pg 58). The population of a country views economic and cultural resources as scarce and limited. Since immigrants are seen as potential competitors for such resources, they become a threat to the well being of the populace. The threat is often more evident among the socially and economically vulnerable groups. Unemployed individuals with low income or low level of education are particularly vulnerable thus they feel the most threatened by the presence of newcomers. This threat is fueled by the idea that immigrants take away jobs, exploit the welfare system and

compete over housing and other social resources. Group threat theory finds that hostility towards an outgroup population is applicable for non material issues as well such as instances in which the group feels that their culture and collective identity is being threatened. Natives reaction of exclusion and prejudice manifest when their collective economic, cultural, or religious interests are threatened (Ceobanu and Escandell 2010, pg 389). This perceived group deprivation can be a powerful trigger of hostility.. The fear that immigrants could alter the prevailing way of life or the foundation of national identity can lead to an increase in anti-immigration sentiments.

Competitive Threat Theory

Competitive theory is similar to group threat theory however while group threat theory focuses on majority group members' identification with their own group, and on the perceived threat posed by minority group members, competitive threat theory looks more specifically at economic conditions. According to competitive threat theory, "harsh economic conditions prompt people to perceive out-group populations as threats to their lives". Immigrants are regarded as competitors who take away opportunities in the labor market. When the economy grows, inflow of immigrants are not seen as competition as the economy is booming. However when the economy is on a downward spiral, the competition over scarce resources in the labor market intensifies. Thus competitive theory suggests that this is likely to increase unfavorable attitudes towards immigrants. This is because both the size of the immigrant population and the economic situation are viewed as two major sources of competition over social and economic resources (Kuntz et al. 2017, pg 232). As rational actors, natives are consistently pursuing their own self interest thus they often have unfavorable attitudes towards immigrants in order to legitimate their social positions when competing with foreigners over jobs or residential space.

This self interest is heightened during times of economic recession (Ceobanu and Escandell 2010, pg 369). Several studies provided support for the thesis that depressed economic conditions (measured by GNP and unemployment rate) are associated with deeper hostility and with negative attitudes toward immigrants (Coenders et al., 2004; Quillian, 1995; Scheepers et al., 2002; Semyonov et al., 2000, 2006)

Social Identity Theory

The issue of ant-immigration arises as a product of Social identity theory. Social identity theories argue that people's sense of who they are stems from what groups they belong to or identify with (Sniderman et al. 2004, pg 401). This identification often leads to in-group favouritism and a sense of group superiority which results in the creation of stereotypes (Herbst and Glynn 2004, pg 68). A person's positive identification with his or her own group is thought to be accompanied by a simultaneous process of differentiation from outsiders (Ceobanu and Escandell 2010, pg 325). Stereotypes reinforce differentiation between other groups and they create extra boundaries. A common criticism of this theory relates to the actual causal mechanisms implicating ATII and identities, i.e., whether identities determine attitudes or vice versa (Ceobanu and Escandell 2010, pg 326)

Contact Theory

Ceobanu and Escandell discuss the contact theory as another way of assessing the impact of individual factors on attitudes towards immigrants. In the form of the "contact hypothesis", this perspective builds on Allport's 1954 proposition that contact generally fosters more favorable attitudes toward out-group members (Ceobanu and Escandell 2010, pg 320). Some scholars use contact theory as a proposition that the presence of immigrants may in fact reduce

hostility of the host society members toward immigrants rather than increase it (Kuntz et al. 2017, pg 232). They suggest that contact, which becomes possible when a large number of immigrants are present, is a very effective means to reduce enmity of the host society toward newcomers by lowering anxiety and increasing knowledge and empathy toward them. A few studies have put both group threat and contact theories to test in a single framework. For example, Schlüter and Wagner (2008) found empirical support for both of them, implying that the two theories are not mutually exclusive but rather complementary. A larger immigrant group size both increases threat and contact, whereas contact in turn reduces threat. As well, Kwak and Wallace (2018) use competitive threat theory as the primary theory used in their research of the effects of economic conditions on anti-immigrant sentiments.

Social Salience

Social Salience is another theory that is used to explore social behavior towards immigrants. According to Oxtoby (2008), each individual has any number of identities and these identities can be more or less salient at any moment in time. The relative salience of these identities can significantly affect behavior. There is evidence that priming identities affect behaviors other than task performance. In an experiment ran by Bargh et al (1996), the authors reported that priming an African-American stereotype (through subliminal pictures being flashed on a computer screen as a subject is working on a tedious task) caused non-African-American participants to react with more hostility to a computer error. Furthermore, research in both psychology and economics literature has demonstrated that social identity can affect simple social interactions. Identity has been shown to motivate differential treatment of in-group and out-group members. Through simple games, Benabou and Tirole (2006) and Akerlof and

Kranton (2000) found that the violation of in-group norms by in-group members can be seen as a threat to the identity of the group (Ghatak and Verdier 2017, pg 13). As a result, individuals are motivated to keep the value of the group identity by punishing the offender. This leads to the argument that there can be tension between an individual's social identity and economic interests and depending on the strength of these identities and their salience. For example a poor person may not vote for the kind of redistributive policy a purely economic self-interest based argument would imply (Ghatak and Verdier 2017, pg 17)

Building off this argument, Ghatak and Verdier use the Bus Stop example to link the social salience of an individual to economic factors. The argument is that in a crowded bus, people tend to direct their rage at new passengers who keep on boarding, and want the bus to stop at as few stops as possible, but do not ask why there are so few buses (Ghatak and Verdier 2017). Since ethnic identity is identifiable, it is much easier to blame an identifiable group such as immigrants as opposed to blaming the invisible hands of the market. Taking the bus example as a metaphor for economic opportunity, as growth slows down, people are more likely to use immigrants as scapegoats whose ethnic and cultural differences now seem more salient

CHAPTER IV

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN ECONOMIC CONDITIONS AND ATTITUDES TOWARDS IMMIGRATION

The previous section gave an overview of theories that attempt to explain why there can be negative attitudes towards immigration. Many of those theories are impacted by economic determinants. Often times, hostility towards immigrants is increased in times where there is

competition over resources and economic concerns. This section will look at various economic factors such as globalisation, economic growth, employment status and competition of public goods in order to determine the impact that economic factors have on driving negative attitudes and opposition towards immigration.

Globalisation

With immigration being such a hot topic, many works of literature have looked at the economic factors that impact people's view towards immigration. Within Montserrat Guibernau (2010), Guibernau argues that one of the driving factors for the increase in anti-immigration sentiments, and in turn the rise in the Far right, has been the rise of globalisation. The process of globalisation is having a "major impact on the lives of individuals who see consumption, production, leisure, media, education, travel and politics affected by increasing interdependence and speed in communications and technological developments" (Guibernau 2010, pg 5). As a result, the impact of globalisation can affect people's experience of the economy and politics. The rise in new radical parties are reflective of "the insecurity and instability brought about by rapid social and economic changes and a technological revolution that has resulted in the restructuring of the world economy" (Guibernau 2010, pg 7). The shift in manufacturing from industrialized societies to developing one's, where production is cheaper and labor regulations less strict, creates a sense of vulnerability for those who might lose their job. While a successful elite benefits from operating in this global flexible market, a growing number of low and medium-skilled workers begin to have lower self esteem and they develop a perception that immigrants are coming to their country to steal their jobs.

Guibernau (2010) argues that globalisation contributes to cultural anxiety for people who are concerned that their culture and language might disappear. An example being the French who “are extremely preoccupied about the predominance of English worldwide and, in particular, by the progressive displacement of the use of French within EU institutions as well as the introduction of English expressions into the French language” (Guibernau 2010, pg 6). This feeling of vulnerability and fear can often turn into hostility, xenophobia and racism against those regarded as different (Guibernau 2010, pg 12). A significant number of nations and ethnic groups share a genuine concern about the possible eventual disappearance of their cultures and languages, Guibernau argues that the new radical right has been able to capture these feelings of security and uncertainty and “has addressed them through a political discourse based on underlying the distinction between those who belong and the “others” (Guibernau 2010, pg 6). “In addition, the pervasive threat of terrorism since 9/11 is also associated with “outsiders”, people who do not “belong” even if they are citizens” (Guibernau 2010, pg 6). This has caused the emergence of ethnic nationalism with this need to “preserve national identity against foreign influence” (Guibernau 2010, pg 9)

Economic Growth and anti-immigration sentiments

It is often thought that increasing signs of xenophobia are caused by changing economic conditions over time. The belief is that public attitudes towards immigrants and immigration become more positive in good economic times and more negative in economic downturns. This belief is motivated by competitive threat theory which suggests that deteriorating economic conditions intensify economic competitions with immigrants for scarce resources such as jobs and welfare benefits which contributes to increased anti-immigration sentiments . Wallace and

Kwak look at the impact of adverse economic conditions on anti-immigration attitudes by investigating the impact of the Great Recession on perceived immigrant threat. As the worst economic crisis since the Great Depression of the 1930s, the Great Recession of 2007–2010 disrupted economic security, social status, and ways of life of millions of citizens (Wallace and Kwak, pg 4). Couple this time of economic downturn with the increase in immigration and the result is a large number of native workers becoming nervous about their economic situation “causing them to project their fears and anxieties onto immigrants and triggering support for anti-immigrant policies” (Kwak and Wallace, pg 4).

For their dependent variable, Kwak and Wallace used the *Perceived Immigrant threat (PIT)* which measures respondents sense of threat from the presence of immigrants in their country. The first six questions ask respondents’ how much they agree or disagree with the following statements: “(1) Immigrants increase crime rates; (2) Immigrants are generally good for [COUNTRY’S] economy; (3) Immigrants take jobs away from people who were born in [COUNTRY]; (4) Immigrants improve [COUNTRY’S NATIONALITY] society by bringing new ideas and cultures; (5) Legal immigrants to [COUNTRY] who are not citizens should have the same rights as [COUNTRY NATIONALITY] citizens; (6) [COUNTRY] should take stronger measures to exclude illegal immigrants.” The seventh question asks: (7) “Do you think the number of immigrants to [COUNTRY] nowadays should be: 1 = increased a lot, 2 = increased a little, 3 = remain the same as it is, 4 = reduced a little, 5 = reduced a lot?”. In their analysis, they found that levels of PIT were positively associated with age, being a citizen and being unemployed. These results are consistent with past research on anti-immigration sentiment. They conclude that respondents confronted with economic strain display a more

negative attitude towards immigrants and that racial prejudices and high local concentration of foreigners are associated with a stronger anti-foreigner sentiment. They also found that their data supported the rapid immigration influx hypothesis such that that anti-immigrant sentiments increase when the immigrant population increases quickly in a short period of time.

In his paper, Joakim Ruist looks further at this relationship between economic growth and anti-immigration sentiments. For this study, Ruist regressed an analysis of how variation in macroeconomic conditions influenced the variation in attitudes to immigration over time within 23 European countries that were observed biannually 2002-2012. The primary measure of attitudes to immigration was obtained from the survey question: (1) Is [country] made a worse or a better place to live by people coming to live here from other countries? Answers were coded on a 0-10 scale with 10 being the most positive reply. The question thus represents an overall assessment about the respondents' perception of whether immigration is bad or good for their country. Three indicators were used as macro-level variables to measure business cycle variation. Those indicators were real GDP per capita growth rate, the unemployment rate and government debt. Ruist's results indicated that attitudes to immigration become more positive when growth increases, unemployment decreases, or government debt decreases. Furthermore, the results supported previous studies that claimed attitudes to immigration are more negative among less educated, unemployed, and older individuals

Impact of Employment Status on anti-immigrant sentiment

Building off of the competitive theory that when economic conditions deteriorate, negative attitudes towards immigrants rise, Kuntz, Davidov and Semyonov looked at the relationship between employment status and anti-immigration sentiments. The belief is that that

people feel much more vulnerable about their employment status and income status during times of economic downturn and, as a result, will be much less tolerant towards immigrants and newcomers. More specifically, unemployed individuals with low (perceived) income or low level of education are particularly vulnerable and, thus, threatened by competition due to newcomer. These feelings are thought to be enhanced during times of economic downturn. Kunts, Davidov and Semyonov wanted to test this theory by analyzing two rounds of the European Social Survey with data from before 2006 and after 2010, the peak of the European Economic crisis. Their work was based on Competitive Threat Theory and Group Threat model. Using theoretical models and previous studies, Kuntz, Davidov and Semyonov made three hypothesis for their paper: At the individual level, they expected that the lower the perceived income of the individual, the stronger the negative attitude towards immigrants. Relying on the group threat theory, they expected that rising unemployment to result in more negative attitudes towards immigrants. Finally, they expected rising aggregate levels of subjective income insecurity to result in more negative attitudes toward immigrants.

Their final results showed that anti-immigrant sentiments increased in countries where perceptions of economic insecurity also increased. Anti-immigrant sentiments decreased in countries where perceptions of economic insecurity declined. Their data revealed that country-level anti-immigrant attitudes and mean levels of perceived income insecurity are highly and significantly correlated in both 2006 ($r = .745$) and 2010 ($r = .840$), indicating that countries with higher perceived income insecurity tend to show higher levels of anti-immigrant attitudes both before and after the crisis. The results of the analysis suggest that, on average, country average anti-immigrant sentiments tend to be less pronounced in prosperous countries

and more pronounced in countries where economic conditions are suppressed. The data analysis provided firm support for the expectation that individuals who feel less secure with their income are more likely to have negative attitudes toward immigrants.

Impact of Skill and Unskilled labor on Anti-immigration Sentiments

Looking further into this relationship, Mayda (2001) along with O'Rourke and Sinnott (2004) looked at the impact of skill distributions of native and foreign workers on anti-immigration sentiments. They found that low skilled or less educated individuals in developed countries have stronger anti-immigration sentiments. This is due to the fact that most immigrants to these countries are low skilled as well. Their presence increases the competition within this sector of the labor market which in turn decreases the wage of low skilled natives and increases their risk of unemployment. O'Rourke and Sinnott made a prediction in their paper that the impact of skills on anti-immigrant sentiment should be related to a country's GDP per capita (O'Rourke and Sinnott 2010). In the richest countries, being high-skilled should have a negative impact on anti-immigrant sentiment. In the poorest countries, being high-skilled should have a positive impact on anti-immigrant sentiment. In rich countries skilled workers favor both trade and immigration, while unskilled workers are protectionist and anti-immigration. In poor countries, it is the unskilled who are liberal in their attitudes towards both trade and immigration, while the skilled favor both protection and immigration restrictions.

Cerna and Haynes (2010) look at the changes in high skilled immigration policies that have occurred in the past decades within Europe. As a result of globalisation, there has been an increase in demand for high skilled labor and an increase in competition for finding the best and brightest. Having said that, in times of economic downturn and shock such as the global

economic crisis of 2008-2009, it usually “tightens its labour policies and begin to propose or implement more restrictive high skilled immigration (HSI) policies” (Cerna and Haynes 2010, pg 15). These policy changes included reducing numerical limits/ quotas, as well as shortage lists, reinforcing labour market tests, making it difficult to renew work permits, limiting non-discretionary flows (e.g. family reunification, work permits for spouses) and encouraging return-migration (Cerna and Haynes 2010, pg 11). Labour market competition intensifies when unemployment rates increase and economic growth decreases because native and immigration labour forces are placed “in more direct competition than in periods of economic prosperity” (Cerna and Haynes 2010, pg 10). Many politicians and people justify restrictive immigration policies by looking at the unemployment rate yet according to Cerna and Haynes that is a lack of understanding regarding the mismatch of labour demand and supply. Thus although the highly skilled immigrant workers are taking jobs that there is a shortage of, they are still perceived as competition by non immigrants. The perception of labour migrants can be negative even if native workers are employed.

Immigration and Competition of Public Goods

Another economic factor that causes an increase in anti-immigration sentiments is the fear that immigrants burden public finances through intensive use of public services (Dustmann and Preston 2004, pg 11). On one hand, some natives fear that they will lose their job to immigrants. On the other hand, many natives fear having to carry the costs of more immigrants using social services. This leaves immigrants in a lose-lose situation in the public eye as they are either taking away jobs or free riding on benefits provided by the state. The anti-immigrant sentiment is motivated by fears that immigration will increase the natives' tax burden

(Meseguer and Kemmerling 2018). Especially among high income natives, there is a fear that government will respond to increasing inflows of immigrants by raising taxes and leave social benefits untouched. If this is the formula policy makers choose, high-income natives should exhibit “the strongest opposition to immigrants having access to social services, particularly if immigrants are predominantly low-skilled” (Meseguer and Kemmerling 2018). Meseguer and Kemmerling found that due to the fear of having to pay higher taxes as a result of high immigration rates, rich natives would be less likely to support immigration in states with high fiscal exposure. If policy makers choose to not increase taxes in response to increase in immigration flows, anti-immigration sentiments would still rise as now natives would be competing with immigrants for the same amount of social benefits.

Similar to the work done by Kuntz, Davidov and Semyonov (2017), Meseguer and Kemmerling find that the natives perception of the impact of immigrants on public goods depends on their income. Since high-skilled immigrants do not crowd out poor natives in the use of social services, rich natives will be in favor of skilled immigrants more than poor natives will be (Meseguer and Kemmerling 2010). If the natives fear being crowded out of the social services, then poor natives will be against unskilled immigrants more intensely than rich natives. Thus in states that are highly fiscally exposed, poor natives are significantly less likely to support unskilled immigration than in states with low exposure (Meseguer and Kemmerling 2010).

To conclude, it is evident that economic concerns play a pivotal role in driving negative attitudes towards immigration. Globalisation has caused people to feel afraid and vulnerable about their job security. These feelings can quickly turn into xenophobia and racism towards newcomers as there is a belief that immigrants are the ones that are taking their jobs. In times of

economic downturn, these xenophobic and racist thoughts are exemplified. This is due to the fact that during these periods resources are more scarce and immigrants are perceived as competition and a threat. Furthermore Kuntz et al (2017) showed that in countries where perceptions of economic insecurity are high, anti-immigration sentiments are increased. This reinforces the notion that when economic conditions deteriorate, negative attitudes towards immigrants rise.

CHAPTER V

MORAL CONSEQUENCES OF ECONOMIC GROWTH

Within the *Moral Consequences of Economic Growth*, Benjamin Friedman discusses the idea that despite the benefits of economic growth (such as rise in standard of living, less poverty and hunger, less disease), many people are uncomfortable with economic growth. With greater affluence comes better food, bigger house, more travel and improved medical care, many of these advantages lie mostly in the material realm. For Friedman, economic growth rarely means simply more. “The qualitative changes that accompany economic growth such as changes in work arrangement, in power structures have always generated resistance” (Friedman 2006, pg 20). Nevertheless, “economic growth often leads to a rise in standard of living for the majority of citizens which results in greater opportunity, tolerance of diversity, social mobility and commitment to fairness” (Friedman 2006, pg 21).

Although everybody wants to make more income as to enjoy a higher standard of living, better health and a greater sense of security, people’s happiness isn’t always associated with a higher income. What constitutes as “more” for people is relative and is based on them comparing their lives to some kind of reference point. When doing this comparison, individuals look at two

benchmarks: their own (or their family's) past experience and how they see people living around them. When people are getting ahead, they are more inclined to be generous or tolerant to newcomers. Happiness of course isn't solely dependent on income however people with higher income typically have better educations and a stronger sense of security in the face of major life uncertainties. Economic growth allows people to feel better off as they are doing better compared to their previous benchmark. If people feel that they are living better than their past, their desire to live better than others is greatly reduced. Once the growth stops however, no matter how people's income have risen, it is only a matter of time before habits adapt and the sense of heightened well being disappears. When the economy stagnates, the importance people attach to living better than others who they compare themselves to becomes more intense. It is often people in the lower half of the income distribution, not the very poor but semiskilled workers, who react most defensively when an economy stagnates.

For Friedman, economic growth or stagnation affect a society's character. "This dynamic relationship reflects the process by which public attitudes form, before they result in new legislation or other changes in government" (Friedman 2006, pg 92). Once individuals have formed their basic attitudes about such matters, they are normally very slow to change them. The implication for that is people take on "certain basic attitudes in young adulthood, depending in large part on the economic conditions they experience in these formative years, and they retain those attitudes throughout the remainder of their lives" (Friedman 2006, pg 98). What matters is not whether people's income and living standards have increased compared to the year before or even the year before that, but whether the average citizen can see progress over the last decade or the last generation. For individuals it is important to have a sense of getting ahead compared to

how their parents lived, and whether their experience gives them confidence that their children will do even better. For example the decade and a half following the Civil War brought exuberant economic growth that meant rapidly rising incomes for most Americans. “This led to a period of awareness of progress and an appreciation of individual opportunity leading to Congress sponsoring the Civil Rights Act of 1875 which forbid discrimination based on race in a variety of public and private activities” (Friedman 2006, pg 130).

Friedman’s theories directly apply to attitudes towards immigration as one could argue that individuals who feel that they have not gotten ahead compared to their parents, would display more negative attitudes towards immigration as they would see immigrants as a possible reason for their inability to attain upward mobility. In this way, Friedman’s theory regarding economic growth builds off of many of the economic determinants that were discussed in earlier sections. For example, previous papers argued that during times of economic downturn or stagnation, negative attitudes towards immigrants increase. This theory goes in hand with Friedman’s argument as he argued that during these periods, people don’t feel like they are getting ahead which can cause them to feel insecure. If individuals feel like they are not doing better, they are going to be far less tolerant of newcomers. In these periods of economic downturn, resources are scarce and immigrants are seen as a threat and competition whereas in times of economic prosperity, people are more likely to be welcoming and generous towards newcomers.

CHAPTER VI

THE DATA

The data for this paper will come from the General Social Survey. It is cross sectional cumulative data from 1972 to 2016. My dependent variable for measuring people's view on immigration will be *Letin1* from the General Social Survey however it will be renamed as *Anti-immigration* for my regressions in order to be able to analyze the coefficient more effectively. The higher the coefficient, the more individuals are displaying anti-immigration sentiments. The variable asks people "Do you think the number of immigrants to America nowadays should be...?" to which respondents punch in answer of 1 to 4 with 1 being increased a lot and 4 being reduced a lot. I renamed this variable to *anti-immigration* as the variable is intended to measure the people's preference over immigration flows thus a higher number coefficient for that variables indicates higher anti-immigration sentiments.

The constant independent variable that I used for an individual was region, gender and race.

Region: This variable ask respondent what region he/she is from. The answers range from 1 to 9. 1 is New England, 2 - Middle Atlantic, 3 - East Coast Central, 4 - West North Central, 5 - South Atlantic, 6 - East South Central, 7 - West South Central, 8 - Mountain, 9 - Pacific.

Age: This variable measures the responder's age. Answers range from 1 representing 10-19 years to 8 which is 80 years and above.

Gender: Responders answer 1 if they identify as a male and 2 if they identify as a female.

Race: Responders were asked what race they consider themselves. The responses were 1 to 3 with 1 being white, 2 being black and 3 being other.

The independent variables that I looked at to measure current economic status are marital status, education levels, occupational prestige level and income.

Marital: The respondent is asked about his/her current marital status. Answers range from 1 to 4 with 1 being legally married, 2 being in a civil union or registered domestic partnership, 3 being separated and 4 being not currently married or in a civil union or registered domestic partnership

Educ: The responder is asked about his/her education level. Answers range from 0 which is no formal schooling to 20 which is 8 years of formal schooling

Realinc: The respondent is asked how much income they have earned

Incom16: Thinking about the time when you were 16 years old, compared with American families in general then, would you say your family income was? Answers range from 1-5: far below average (1), below average (2), average (3), above average (4), or far above average (5)?

Paeduc: Respondents are asked on the level of education that their father received. Answers range from 0 which is no formal schooling to 20 which is 8 years of formal schooling.

Maeduc: Same as above except respondents are asked about their mother's level of education

Prestg10: Respondents are asked about their occupation prestige score. Answers range from 0 to 100 with 0 being the lowest prestige score and 100 being the highest.

Papres10: Respondents are asked about the occupation prestige score of their father. Answers are calculated in the range from 0-100 similar to *Prestg10*

Mapres10: Respondents are asked about the occupation prestige score of their mother. Answers range from 0 to 100 again.

CHAPTER VII

THE EMPIRICAL MODEL

To view factors that might have an impact on people's response to the immigration question (variable *anti-immigration*), the variable will be regressed against other social and cultural variables. The equation for the regression will be:

$$Anti - Immigration = \alpha + \beta X_{it} + \delta R + \gamma + \kappa Z_{it} + \varepsilon t$$

The coefficient α will be the constant factors such as age, age squared, gender. If the coefficient for age is large and positive we expect that the older individuals are, the more they are opposed to immigrants entering the country. X is the social variables such as income, level of education and marital status. Based off of other papers, we would expect that individuals with low income and low level of education will be more opposed to immigration thus we would assume that the coefficients for income and level of education to be negative. Coefficient R will be the regional variable. This will look at how people from different regions of United States will respond to immigration. Coefficient γ represents the cultural variables which will be religion. I will look at two variables, (*relig*) which looks at the religion that individuals associate themselves with and (*attend*) which looks at how often individuals attend religious events.

The coefficient Z will be the generational variables I will look at. I want to use these variables to look at the impact of generational changes on individual's attitudes towards immigration. The first generational change to look at is the generational change in income. Friedman's getting ahead theory is based on economic growth and he associates growth with an increase in income. The variable for generational change in income is *incz* and is calculated by subtracting *Realinc*, the current income level of the respondent subtracted by *incom16* which is

how much the respondents parents were earning when he/she was 16. We would predict that if people are making more money now than what their parents were making, then that individual will be more tolerant towards immigrants as that individual feels like they have achieved upward mobility.

Geneducm is the generational change in education for a man. It is calculated by subtracting the education level of the individual's father by the individual's current level of education. *Geneducf* is the generational change in education for a female and it is calculated by subtracting the education level of the individual's mother by the current individual's current level of education. *Gened_pa* measures the generational change in education between the individual and both of his parents. If an individual has received a higher education than their parents, their result will be positive for this algorithm and therefore we would expect them to be more open to immigration policies as they're in a better position than their parents were. Similarly if an individual's result is negative, that means they have received a lower education than their parents thus it is more likely that they would develop more anti-immigration sentiments.

General change in prestige is an important variable to look at since changes in occupational prestige can indicate upward mobility as well. An individual could be earning less than their parents however if they are working at job with a higher occupational prestige ranking they will still feel like they have achieved upward mobility. Sociologists have identified prestige rankings for more than 700 occupations based on results from a series of national surveys. They created a scale with 0 being the lowest possible score to 100 being the highest, and then ranked the occupations based on the results of the survey. Generational change in prestige for man is

identified as *prestigem* and is calculated by subtracting the man's current occupation's level of prestige *prestg10* minus the prestige of his dad's occupation *papres10*. Generational change in occupation prestige for a women is identified as *prestigef*. It is calculated by subtracting the women's current occupation's level of prestige *prestg10* minus the prestige of her mom's occupation *mapres10*.

CHAPTER VIII

DATA ANALYSIS

In this section, I run regressions to see how different variables impact the response of individuals towards the dependent variable, *anti-immigration*. The first regression is a baseline regression that looks at the current socio-economic status and demographic variables that impacts people's anti-immigration sentiments. The baseline regression shows if the data supports the theories that we explored in the literature review. Theories such as, are unemployed or uneducated individuals more likely to be more hostile to immigrants. After the baseline regression, I run regressions with the generational variables in order to see if Friedman's "getting ahead" theory is supported in the data. Friedman uses change in income as an indicator for economic progress thus I will run regressions using the generational change in income. To test other generational variables that can indicate upward mobility, I run regressions with the generational change in education along with the generational change in occupational prestige. By looking at three different variations of generational variables, we can get a more in depth look of how generational changes can impact an individual's views towards immigration.

Table 1 displays the baseline regression for an individual's response to the letin variable from the GSS survey. The Letin variable has been renamed *anti-immigration* within these

regressions in order to be able to read the coefficient with more ease. A higher coefficient for *anti-immigration* means that individuals want less immigrants entering the country. For the first regression, we are looking at current socio economic components along with demographic factors of an individual and how different variables impact the individual's response to the letin question. To account for different levels of anti-immigration sentiments than can rise in specific years and in specific regions, I ran the regression with interaction variables between year and region. For example in the New York region, anti-immigration sentiments might be higher in 2001 as a result of 9/11 than any other parts of the United States thus the interaction variable can account for that.

The results for the baseline regression results differ from the theories presented by Mayda (2001), O'Rourke and Sinnott (2004) along with Kuntz, Davidov and Semyonov (2017) within the literature review. They had found that low skilled and unemployed individuals in developed countries have stronger anti-immigration sentiments as they believe that immigrants will take their jobs. Within my regression however, those who were unemployed displayed a statistically significant negative coefficient for *anti-immigration* indicating that they are more open to immigrants entering the country. Those who are housekeepers displayed a negative coefficient indicating that they are more open to immigrants. This could possibly be due to the fact that they feel their job is quite safe and will most likely not be replaced by immigrants. The results for education however do fit previous theory. (Kuntz et al. 2017) present the theory that individuals who have a lower level of education feel particularly vulnerable and as a result feel threatened by the presence of newcomers The coefficient *education* in my regression was negative and statistically significant which indicates that an extra year of education causes individuals to be

more tolerant towards immigrants. Those who receive a higher level of education are less likely to feel threatened by newcomers as the jobs that they are going after are not always the jobs provided to new immigrants within the country. The variable for income is *realinc*. The coefficient for *realinc* is negative which fits the theory presented by Kuntz, Davidov and Semyonov (2017). At the individual level, Kuntz, Davidov and Semyonov had expected that the lower the perceived income of the individual, the stronger the negative attitude towards immigrant thus a higher perceived income should correlate with a more positive attitude towards immigrants. The negative coefficient for *realinc* means that those with higher income, feel less vulnerable and are more likely to be open towards immigrants.

Another important coefficients to look at is *race*. For both variables of race, the coefficients were statistically significant with individuals who identified as blacks and other races reporting a negative coefficient. This means that both group of people are more tolerant towards immigrants. This could be due to the fact that both groups of people feel like they are facing anti-immigration sentiments as a result of group threat theory. That sense of struggling from the same obstacles and a feeling of unity could possibly be the reason that blacks and other races display lower anti-immigration sentiments. Another important coefficient to note is that individuals who are not married also displayed a negative coefficient indicating a less hostile outlook towards immigrants. The coefficient of age was statistically significant with a positive coefficient indicating that the higher the age of individuals, the more hostile they are towards immigrants. This could be due to the fact that the older generation might be more conservative and more inclined to stick to their traditional beliefs.

Table 3 displays the generational change in income for an individual through the variable *incz*. The coefficient for the generational change in income is statistically insignificant which differs from the theory presented by Friedman. According to Friedman, individuals whose are currently making more than what their parents were making when they were 16 should feel like they are getting ahead which results in a greater tolerance of diversity. Yet the data in table 3 displays that generational change in income does not have a large impact on people's anti-immigration sentiment. Part of this reason could be issues with the data for *income16*. Many individuals at 16 might not know how much their parents are making as financial matters are a private matter in many households.

Table 4 presents the impact of the generational change in education on the *anti-immigration* variable. The three key variables to be looking at are *geneducm*, *geneducf* and *gened_pa*. The coefficient for *geneducf* is statistically significant and negative indicating that females who receive a higher education than their mother, are more open to immigrants. As well, the coefficient for education is -0.0385 which means that an extra year of education causes females to be 0.0385 less hostile towards immigrants. As indicated by the negative *gened_pa* coefficient, individuals who receive a higher education level than both of their parents are less hostile to immigrants as well. These results fit the “getting ahead” theory presented by Benjamin Friedman in the literature review section. When individuals are receiving a higher education than their parents, especially females who are receiving a higher education than their mothers, they have a sense of getting ahead compared to how their parents lived, and this gives them confidence that their children will do even better. This confidence means that these individuals feel less vulnerable to outsiders and are more likely to be open to immigrants. The results for

generational change in education is likely higher for females as they have achieved much higher upward mobility in the past decades when compared to men. Women had high labor market participation during World War II and the feminist movement of 1960s allowed women to enter the workforce in great numbers. In this way, most women have experienced a much higher level of education than their mother as they have had more opportunities available to them. Men have traditionally always been in the workforce and have been able to achieve higher level of education thus men are more likely to feel like they are not getting ahead.

Table 5 displays the generational change in prestige of an individual's occupation. Within the GSS, each occupation has a level of prestige associated with it, the numbers ranging from 0 being the lowest to 100 being the highest level of prestige. With the generational change in income being statistically insignificant, I thought that the generational difference in prestige could display a bigger impact on an individual's feeling of getting ahead. For example an individual can be doing a job that is earning him/her less money than her parents but the job's prestige level is deemed higher so that individual might still feel that he/she is achieving upward mobility. While the coefficient for *prestigem* is statistically significant and is positive, it doesn't appear to have a huge impact on an individual's anti-immigration sentiments. Having said that, since the coefficient is not negative, it means that men who are currently working a job more prestigious than their dads, are against immigrants entering the country.

Friedman's theory that individuals who feel that they are doing better than their parents are more likely to be more tolerant towards immigrants, was only supported in the generational change in education with the largest impact coming from generational change in education for females. Females who are attaining a higher education than their mothers, did show to be more

tolerant towards immigrants by displaying a statistically significant negative coefficient. The generational change in education for both parents was also negative further supporting Friedman's theory. Friedman's "getting ahead" theory was initially about generational change in income however our data reported statistically insignificant coefficient for changes in income meaning that the change in income had minimal impact on an individual's anti-immigration sentiments. This could however be due to the fact that many individuals at the age of 16 do not have knowledge of how much their parents are earning. Many households keep financial matters private in contrast to education level or even occupational prestige. It is far more likely that an individual at 16 knows if his/her parents went to college or where they are employed as opposed to how much income they are earning. The generational change in prestige of occupation for males was statistically significant and positive which indicates that men who are currently employed at job that has a higher prestige than their father's job, are less tolerant towards immigrants. This goes against Friedman's theory as those who are doing better than their parents, in this case employed a job with a higher prestige than what their father did for a living, should theoretically be more tolerant towards immigrants.

CHAPTER IX

CONCLUSION

Friedman's getting ahead theory provided an interesting perspective to look at when determining what factors can cause anti-immigration sentiments to rise. His theory is based on looking at an individual's past and where they come from as opposed to strictly looking at current socioeconomic status. While the generational change in education fit Friedman's theory, the results from the other generational variables told a different picture. Generational change in

income ended up being insignificant and generational change in occupational prestige revealed a theory opposite to Friedman in the sense that males who are employed in a job with a higher prestige than their father's displayed more anti-immigration sentiments. These results indicate that generational factors are not as important in impacting people's anti-immigration sentiments especially for males. The data for men showed that even those who achieved upward mobility compared to their parents, maintained the same level of anti-immigration sentiments. This means that many individuals develop their view towards immigration at a young age and likely hold onto the same beliefs when they get older regardless of how much upward mobility they achieve. That would indicate current socio-economic status and demographic factors could still be a better indicator of an individual's anti-immigration sentiments.

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APPENDIX

Table 1. Size and Share of the Foreign-Born Population in the United States, 1970-2016

Table 1. Size and Share of the Foreign-Born Population in the United States, 1970-2016

Year	Size of Immigrant Population (Millions)	Immigrant Share of Total U.S. Population
1970	9.6	4.7%
1980	14.1	6.2%
1990	19.8	7.9%
2000	31.1	11.1%
2010	40.0	12.9%
2016	43.7	13.5%

Source: Migration Policy Institute (MPI) tabulation of data from the U.S. Census Bureau 2010 and 2016 American Community Surveys (ACS), and 1970-2000 decennial Census data.

Table 2. Individual's response to GSS Survey

(2)	
VARIABLES	anti immigration
Part time	-0.103*** (0.0299)
Temp not working	0.0535 (0.0619)
Unemployed/laid off	-0.0117 (0.0476)
Retired	-0.0659* (0.0337)
School	-0.119**

	(0.0526)
Keeping House	-0.0526
	(0.0324)
Other	0.0846
	(0.0592)
Married	-0.00589
	(0.0385)
Widowed	0.0207
	(0.0266)
Divorced	-0.0956*
	(0.0498)
Never Married	-0.124***
	(0.0266)
childs	0.00738
	(0.00646)
age	0.00276***
	(0.000798)
educ	-0.0448***
	(0.00339)
sex	0.0357*
	(0.0188)
black	-0.218***
	(0.0273)
other	-0.594***
	(0.0337)
realinc	-4.61e-07
	(3.11e-07)

Constant	4.343***
	(0.153)
Observations	13,881
R-squared	0.084

Standard errors in parentheses
*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

Table 2 Notes: Baseline Regression with interaction variables between Year and region

Table 3. Generational Change in Income

VARIABLES	(1) Anti-immigration
<u>incz</u>	-0.0143 (0.0101)
<u>realinc</u>	-1.59e-07 (4.71e-07)
<u>educ</u>	-0.0446*** (0.00394)
sex	0.0384* (0.0216)
Constant	4.376*** (0.102)
Observations	10,649
R-squared	0.075

Standard errors in parentheses
*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

Table 3 Notes: Generational change in income. Controlling for year, region, marital status, number of children, work status and race

Table 4. Generational Change in Education

VARIABLES	<i>Men</i> Anti- immigration	<i>Women</i> Anti- immigration	<i>Both Parents</i> Anti- immigration
<i>geneducm</i>	0.001000 (0.00427)		
<i>educ</i>	-0.0510*** (0.00586)	-0.0385*** (0.00551)	-0.0442*** (0.00400)
<i>realinc</i>	-3.24e-07 (4.77e-07)	-3.97e-07 (4.62e-07)	-4.15e-07 (3.30e-07)
<i>geneducf</i>		-0.0118*** (0.00414)	
<i>gened_pa</i>			-0.00586** (0.00296)
<i>sex</i>			0.0339* (0.0206)
Constant	4.530*** (0.132)	4.312*** (0.118)	4.352*** (0.0927)
Observations	4,858	6,701	11,559
R-squared	0.085	0.078	0.078

Standard errors in parentheses
 *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

Table 4 notes: Generational Education variable. Controlling for year, region, marital status, number of children, work status and race.

Table 5. Generational Change in Prestige

VARIABLES	(1) Anti- immigration	(2) Anti- immigration
<u>prestigem</u>	0.00338*** (0.00121)	
<u>prestg10</u>	-0.00667*** (0.00172)	-0.00109 (0.00179)
<u>educ</u>	-0.0405*** (0.00605)	-0.0480*** (0.00704)
<u>realinc</u>	-2.34e-07 (4.83e-07)	-1.36e-07 (5.55e-07)
<u>prestigef</u>		0.000566 (0.00124)
Constant	4.690*** (0.131)	4.509*** (0.143)
Observations	5,138	4,691
R-squared	0.091	0.077

Standard errors in parentheses
 *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

Table 5 notes: Generational Occupation Prestige. Controlling for year, region, marital status, number of children, work status and race.

Table 6. Summary Statistic of Variables.

Variable	Obs	Mean	Std. Dev.	Min	Max
anti_immig~n	15,573	3.612663	1.083633	1	5
geneducm	20,032	2.629143	4.018043	-16	20
geneducf	28,880	2.363331	3.429667	-20	20
prestigem	21,266	.0509264	16.1509	-64	63
prestigef	10,360	2.706467	16.41523	-57	56
incz	44,598	.0014422	1.302294	-3.611217	6.466909
year	62,466	1994.072	12.93794	1972	2016
wrkstat	62,447	3.055135	2.449644	1	8
prestgl0	57,801	42.92194	12.93895	16	80
marital	62,441	2.299162	1.614167	1	5
papresl0	49,254	43.68466	12.04499	16	80
mapresl0	19,424	41.16057	12.89266	16	80
childs	62,269	1.942861	1.779832	0	8
age	62,245	45.99134	17.50556	18	89
educ	62,292	12.83723	3.17913	0	20
paeduc	44,150	10.66544	4.343731	0	20
maeduc	51,781	10.81231	3.760914	0	20
sex	62,466	1.558768	.4965383	1	2
race	62,466	1.247335	.5409166	1	3
incoml6	49,035	2.766677	.8778609	1	5
region	62,466	4.913601	2.455048	1	9