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Attitudes Towards Immigration in the United States

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Introduction to Research

- This study explores how the American people view the topic of immigration as it relates to the United States; More specifically, attitudes towards current immigration levels, feeling thermometers towards illegal immigration, and immigrations impact on the American job market .
- The terrorists attacks on 9/11 are one contributing factor in creating negative attitudes towards immigrant groups such as Latinos.
 - Resulted in inciting American nationalism which has created issues for immigrant groups due to the belief by many that these people are “anti-American”

Labor Market Theory

- Separates the market between white collar professionals and low wage blue collar workers.
- ANES (American National Election) data has shown that individuals working in “high threat” blue collar jobs are more likely to show greater levels of opposition towards increases in immigration.
- Those working in the white collar sector of the economy do not feel as threatened due to the fact that immigrants typically do not occupy more prominent positions in the job market.
- Economic hardship in America therefore contributes to inciting anxiety against immigrant groups. Many believe that they will contribute to taking jobs away from citizens.
- News about the costs of immigration boosts white opposition far more when Latino immigrants, rather than European immigrants, are featured
- Latino immigrants in general are viewed to be more economically burdensome compared to immigrants from other nations due to the stereotypical view that Latino immigrants occupy positions that require manual labor.

Hypotheses:

- H 1: People are more likely to fear immigration as the prevailing cause for the lack of jobs.
- H 2: Older Americans are more likely to favor decreases in immigration levels.
- H 3: Feeling thermometers can be used to measure anxiety towards immigrant groups.

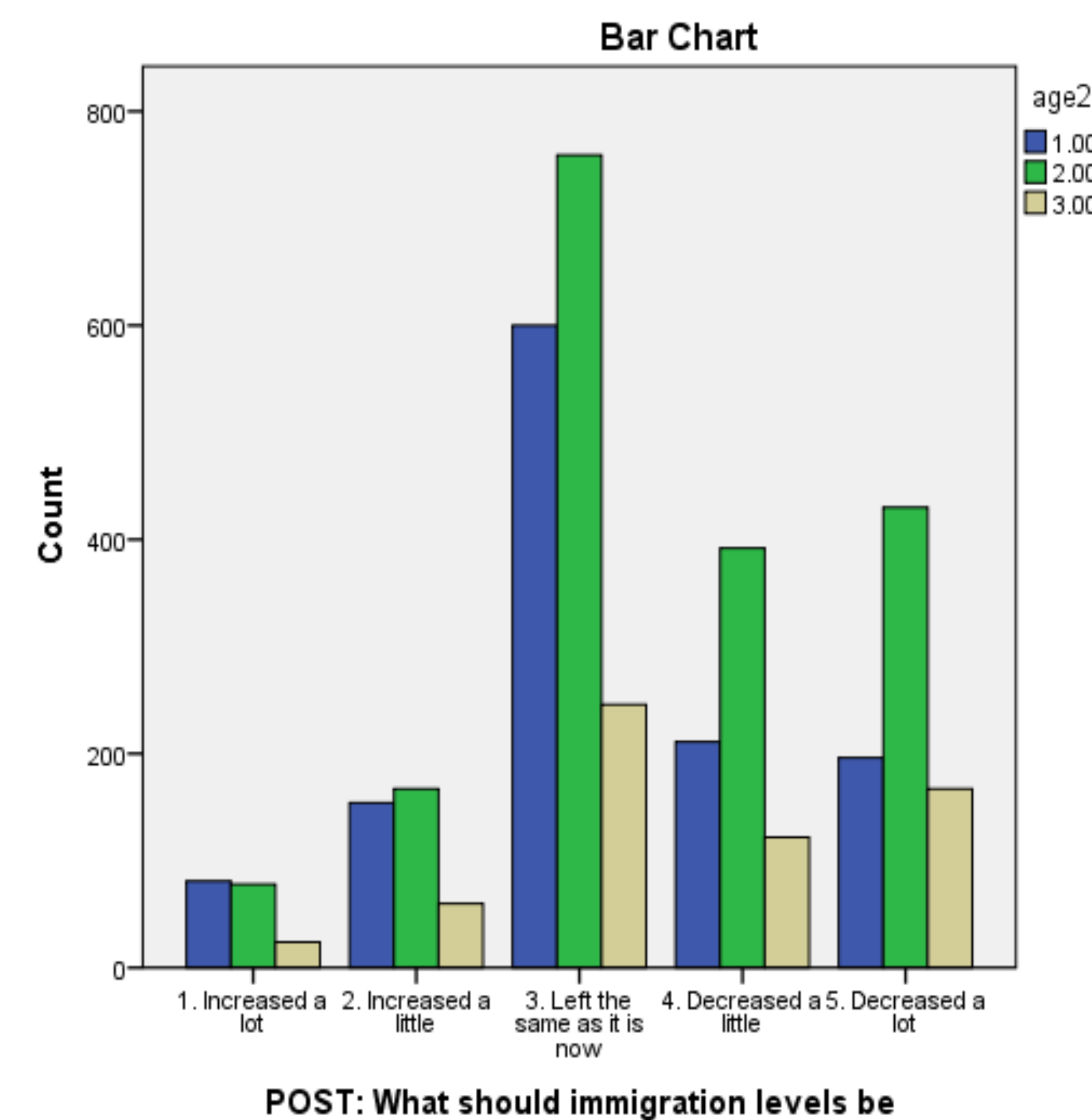
Data

H 1: Lack of Jobs & Immigration

Cross Tabulation Results:

- How likely will immigration take away from jobs: Extremely likely
 - 18.8%
- How likely will immigration take away from jobs: Very likely
 - 19.4%
- How likely will immigration take away from jobs: Somewhat likely
 - 42.4%
- How likely will immigration take away from jobs: Not at All
 - 19.4%

H 2: Age & Immigration Levels



H 3: Feeling Thermometers Towards Immigrants

Coefficients^a

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	1.759	.065		27.134	.000
	POST: CASI/WEB: Feeling thermometer: ILLEGAL IMMIGRANTS	.021	.001	.196	15.403	.000

a. Dependent Variable: POST: What should immigration levels be

Table Interpretation

- Table 2 measures feeling thermometers towards immigrants.
- This produced a significance level of .000 which shows that this variable is indeed significant when considering public attitudes towards immigration.
- Despite economic arguments, this data solidifies the point that individuals tend to harbor stereotypical viewpoints towards certain immigrant groups.

*Significant at <.05
R square for the model is .039

Findings

H1: Lack of Jobs & Fear Towards Immigrants
The results confirmed the hypothesis that people generally believe that immigration to the United States is contributing to taking jobs away from the native born population.

H2: Age and Immigration Levels
The results of this variable confirmed the hypothesis that older people are more opposed to increases in immigration levels in comparison to their younger counterparts. Adults between the age of 35 and 54 were more than twice as likely to oppose increases in immigration than the other age groups surveyed.

H3: Feeling Thermometers
The results produced from this variable show that people with more favorable feeling thermometers towards immigrants will be more receptive to increases in immigration levels. Feeling thermometers can be used when measuring the level of anxiety an individual has towards a particular immigrant group.

Conclusions

- Individuals who favor a decrease in immigration levels share the belief that immigrants are likely to take away American jobs.
- Individuals between the ages of 35-54 are more likely to favor decreases in immigration levels
- People over the age of 55 do not necessarily advocate for lower levels of immigration.
- Economic hardship in the nation incites negative feelings and anxieties towards immigrants.
- Americans that work blue collar jobs are more likely to feel that immigrants are taking away jobs in comparison to white collar workers.

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