

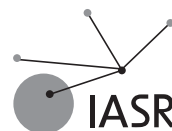


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Article

# Trust, Sense of Security, and Immigration Policy Preferences of the Kenyan Public

**Alan Dixon Brown**

Center for Regional Development, Chonnam National University, Gwangju, Republic of Korea

**Woo-Jin Shin\***

Department of Economics, Chonnam National University, Gwangju, Republic of Korea

**Jeong Hwan Bae**

Department of Economics, Chonnam National University, Gwangju, Republic of Korea

**Jangseop Byeon**

Center for Regional Development, Chonnam National University, Gwangju, Republic of Korea

## Abstract

Immigration is a hot-button issue in African countries, including Kenya. Our study is an empirical attempt to understand the effect of different types of trust and sense of security on attitudes toward immigrants in an African context, which has rarely been the subject of research. Our research model included 'interpersonal trust', 'political-administrative system trust', 'international and non-government institutions trust', and 'supra-national institutions trust'. We also explored whether the group threat hypothesis, which states that as the number of immigrants increases, locals feel a general threat to their security of an economic or social nature, holds in an African context. We applied ordinal logistic regression to a sample of Kenyan data from World Values Survey Wave 7 (2021). We found that among the types of trust, the most consistent predictors of preferences for less restrictive immigration policy were general trust and supra-national institutions trust. Among the sense of security predictors of immigration policy preferences, higher levels of neighbourhood security predicted a preference for less restrictive immigration policy, while higher levels of terrorism worries predicted a preference for more restrictive immigration policy preferences; however, these results were only valid without including control variables. In the discussion, we elucidate implications of the results in both general terms and for the global south, in particular Africa.

## Keywords

Trust, Sense of security, Attitudes toward immigrants, Immigration policy preferences, Kenya

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**Corresponding author:**

\* Email: [sayurban@jnu.ac.kr](mailto:sayurban@jnu.ac.kr)

## Introduction

Immigration is a hot-button issue in African countries, including Kenya. Media reports and government pronouncements focus on the supposed national security threats posed by refugees, meaning that Kenyan's knowledge of immigrants is driven by 'crisis and controversy' rather than engagement (IRC, 2018). The above factors have resulted in refugees and immigrants suffering a rising public backlash (Audette et al., 2020).

Immigration to countries in the global south has been overshadowed in terms of international attention by that to countries of the global north. However, though the movement of international migrants from Africa to European countries elicits focused media coverage, most migration in Africa is not toward Europe, but to other African countries (Flahaux & De Haas, 2016). Kenya acts as a central hub for irregular international migrants in the East Africa region (Marchand et al., 2017). Immigration to Kenya has been dominated by migrants from other African countries, principally Somalia, South Sudan, and Ethiopia.

Immigration policy preferences of the public have important ramifications for immigrants' successful settlement. Support for immigrant-friendly policies puts pressure on government to take a more enlightened approach to immigrant policy. It follows that factors which fosters less restrictive immigration policy preferences would in turn reduce hostility toward immigrants. Literature on public attitudes toward immigrants focuses almost exclusively on industrialized countries in North America and Western Europe (Whitaker & Giersch, 2015), with few studies investigating the situation in African countries (Gordon & Maharaj, 2015; Moagi et al., 2018). It is therefore necessary to understand factors affecting immigrant policy preferences, especially in African countries.

Social capital, commonly proxied as trust, has been established to have a positive effect on attitudes toward immigration (Herrerros & Criado, 2009), immigrants (Economidou et al., 2020), and immigration policy preferences (Chang & Kang, 2018), with the potential to ameliorate conflict and promote the acceptance of immigrants. There is little agreement, however, on which form of trust affects the immigration policy preferences of the public.

Sense of security is also hypothesized to affect attitudes toward immigrants. The group threat hypothesis states that as the number of immigrants increases, locals feel a general threat to their security of an economic or social nature (Blumer, 1958). It is worthwhile to explore whether this hypothesis holds in an African country, and if so, which specific threats to security impact attitudes toward immigrants.

This paper therefore analyses the effect of forms of trust, and security on the immigration policy preferences of the Kenyan public. It identifies which forms of trust and which dimensions of security affect public immigration policy preferences. It focuses on Kenya as a country which has had a large influx of international migrants, especially refugees, who are often viewed with suspicion as being a disruptive influence and potential terrorists. The paper fills a gap in research into the effect of social capital on attitudes toward immigrants in the global south, particularly Africa. It also adds to evidence particularizing the relationship between social capital in the form of trust and attitudes toward immigrants. Third, it tests the group threat hypothesis in Kenya, an African country with insecure borders and an ongoing terrorist threat.

The second part of the paper details the context of immigration to Kenya; the third part presents a literature review which includes trust and attitudes toward immigrants, as well as general theories of attitudes toward immigrants, and proposes the hypotheses; the fourth part describes the data and methodology; the fifth part presents the results, followed by the discussion and conclusion.

## Concepts

### *Immigration to Kenya*

Kenya plays host to many international migrants and refugees and is a key irregular migration hub in East Africa (Marchand et al., 2017). Most migrants and refugees are a product of South-South migration from other African countries as a consequence of the majority of African migration being internal, and not to Europe (Flahaux & De Haas, 2016). Immigration to Kenya reflects economic migration from neighbouring countries, and conflicts occurring within neighbouring countries like Somalia, South Sudan, and Ethiopia, resulting in a 2023 population of around 676,000 registered refugees and asylum seekers (UNHCR, 2023). Economic migration from neighbouring countries reflects its relative level of economic and infrastructural development, existing migrant communities, a long and porous border, and far-reaching human smuggling networks (Marchand et al., 2017).

Immigrants, in particular refugees, face extremely difficult conditions. For refugees, the Kenyan government operates an official policy of 'encampment' (National Council for Law Reporting, 2012). The two largest camps, Dadaab and Kakuma in northern Kenya, together house more than 578,000 refugees as of 2023 (UNHCR, 2023). Inside the camps, the right to freedom of movement and to work are strictly curtailed (IRC, 2018). The camps are currently subject to closure orders, placing refugees in further insecurity. A key justification for the encampment policy is the perceived economic burden that urban refugees place on cities, especially the capital Nairobi (Campbell, 2006). This is even though immigrants in the migrant quarter of Easterleigh operate businesses ranging from informal micro-enterprises to large-scale commercial enterprises in the formal sector and create jobs for Kenyans. Immigrants are frequently scapegoated by politicians and the media, and the policy of refugee encampment enjoys broad public support due to the perceived economic burden produced by urban refugees. The terrorist threat from the group Al-Shabbab is also blamed on immigrants, especially refugees, who are portrayed in media through the lens of national security concerns posed by Somalia-based terrorist groups (IRC, 2018). Interaction between the Kenyan public and immigrants is minimal or non-existent (IRC, 2018), meaning there is no real reference point for them to critically evaluate the distorted views of the media and politicians. This is not to negate the effects of attacks perpetrated by Al-Shabbab, which have resulted in public opinion turning against the Somali community and policies put in place for its benefit (Audette et al., 2020).

### *Trust and Attitudes Toward Immigrants*

Trust forms a core part of social capital, which can be understood as the value derived from social networks which bond those who are similar and bridge those who are not (Uslaner, 2003). It has been linked with virtuous social and economic outcomes, especially for cultivating 'civicness' or 'good citizenship' in individuals and communities. As social capital accumulates, so too do tolerance and respect for the rights of immigrants (Herrerros & Criado, 2009; Putnam, 2000, Chapter 22). Generalized contact theory contributes to the understanding of the relationship between trust and attitudes toward immigrants. Tolerance is expected to derive from people's repeated informal contacts with a diverse range of others, which increases their trust. Those with a high level of trust view immigrants more favourably than those without, regardless of contextual factors, and this moderates the negative effects of perceived threat on people's opinions about immigration (Economidou et al., 2020).

The positive influence of social capital on attitudes toward immigrants and immigration

may not be identical across all forms of trust. For example, trust derived from social networks comprised of family and friends, which comprises bonding social capital, is likely to have more exclusionary outcomes (Putnam, 2000) which don't generalize to entire groups, than that derived from networks of a diverse range of individuals, which comprises bridging social capital (Côté & Erickson, 2009). In other words, bonding networks are less likely to result in improved sentiments toward immigrants and immigration than bridging networks.

Social trust is consistently associated with positive attitudes toward immigrants and immigration policy (Barceló, 2016; Chang & Kang, 2018; Economidou et al., 2020; Herreros & Criado, 2009). Social trust operates in a direct way, as those with higher levels of social trust have more favourable attitudes toward immigration than distrusting individuals, as well as an indirect way, moderating the negative attitudes associated with the perceived threat of immigrants (Herreros & Criado, 2009). Social trust reduces the perceived threat of outgroups; however, this does not apply uniformly across ideological groups, as right-wing ideology reduces the beneficial effect of trust on attitudes toward non-Western immigration (Thomsen & Rafiqi, 2020). The positive impact of social trust on attitudes toward immigration has also been demonstrated at country level. Social trust rich countries with large numbers of foreigners had less xenophobic sentiments toward immigrants than those countries with low social trust (Economidou et al., 2020). We therefore hypothesize that informal forms of trust (family and friend, neighbourhood, social) will have a positive effect on attitudes toward immigration. Trusting individuals should feel a reduced sense of threat from immigration and would be more likely to support immigrant-friendly immigration policies.

Hypothesis 1. The higher an individual's trust of others the more in favor of immigrant-friendly immigration policies they will be.

Hypothesis 1a. The higher an individual's general trust, the more in favor of immigrant-friendly immigration policies they will be.

Hypothesis 1b. The higher an individual's social trust, the more in favor of immigrant-friendly immigration policies they will be.

There have been less consistent results regarding formal types of trust. Political trust had a significantly positive impact on attitudes toward immigration when measured using a question about preference for opening the labour market to immigrants (Chang & Kang, 2018); however, when measured as the preference for providing equal employment opportunities to immigrants, the association was negative but insignificant. Institutional trust, especially of the legal system, resulted in a higher probability of viewing immigrants' effect on the economy positively (Economidou et al., 2020). Although the literature has not produced conclusive results, the general tendency of findings has been of a positive relationship between formal types of trust and attitudes toward immigration. Those with higher levels of formal types of trust show their confidence in the institutions which ensure the smooth operation of the political, economic, and administrative framework. It is thus likely that despite a possible 'threat' such as immigration, they will trust the nation's institutional framework to hold up and continue functioning well. We therefore hypothesize that individuals with higher levels of institutional trust (administrative, civil society, media) would be more likely to support immigrant-friendly immigration policies.

Hypothesis 2. The more confidence an individual has in institutions, the more in favour of immigrant-friendly immigration policies they will be.

Hypothesis 2a. The more confidence an individual has in the political-administrative system, the more in favour of immigrant-friendly immigration policies they will be.

- Hypothesis 2b. The more confidence an individual has in international and non-government Institutions, the more in favour of immigrant-friendly immigration policies they will be.
- Hypothesis 2c. The more confidence an individual has in supra-national Institutions, the more in favour of immigrant-friendly immigration policies they will be.

### ***Theories on Attitudes Towards Immigrants***

Differences in attitudes toward immigrants and immigration have been ascribed to several interdependent explanations. Chief among these are the contact and group threat hypotheses, the human capital hypothesis, ideological orientation, external events, and contextual factors.

The contact and group threat hypotheses are two sides of the same coin. The hypotheses are applied to attitudes toward outgroups such as ethnic and social minorities and are thus applicable to immigrants. According to the contact group hypothesis, the more an individual is exposed to immigrants, the more accepting they will become toward them (Dixon & Rosenbaum, 2004, Pettigrew & Tropp, 2006). In other words, as the number of immigrants increases, and they become more visible, positive orientations toward them will increase (Barceló, 2016). For the beneficial aspects of intergroup contact to arise, the interactions need to meet four simultaneous prerequisites: equal status, common objectives, authority sanction, and an absence of competition (Allport et al., 1954), which rarely happens (Barceló, 2016). Empirical evidence suggests that the nature of contact is crucial, with regular interactions with immigrants overcoming the negative impact of the perceived economic threat and cultural dissimilarity (Freitag & Rapp, 2013). Furthermore, as a substitute for contact, being exposed to information about immigration improves attitudes toward (legal) immigrants (Grigorieff et al., 2020). The group threat hypothesis (Barceló, 2016; Blumer, 1958; Hainmueller & Hangartner, 2013) posits that immigrants will be seen as a threat as they become too numerous, especially if the increase is rapid (Hopkins, 2010). Economic and cultural mechanisms drive group threats (Rudolph & Popp, 2010). In economic terms, locals and immigrants are perceived to be in competition for jobs, and immigration is assumed to impose economic costs on the community and country through welfare support for immigrants crowding out that of locals, and immigrants putting a drag on the economy. However, a critique of job competition (also known as the Labor Market Hypothesis) is that it is not empirically supported and is a ‘zombie’ theory (Hainmueller & Hopkins, 2014). Notably, perceptions of the costs of immigration affect attitudes toward immigration far more than the costs themselves (Garcia & Davidson, 2013). Similarly, subjective economic considerations such as perceived income insecurity and relative deprivation increase support for restrictive immigration policy (Kim & Kim, 2021). Culturally, immigrants pose a perceived threat to identity. They are viewed as culturally dissimilar to others, who hold different interests, beliefs, and values to locals. This sense of ‘other’ arouses a fear of immigrants causing the erosion of local culture (Freitag & Rapp, 2013). In Kenya, the public associates Somalis, who are present as citizens, refugees, and economic migrants, with security threats due to their negative portrayal in the media (Audette et al., 2020). The group threat hypothesis has also been explained as being the consequence of self-interest and sociotropic concerns. Evidence from previous studies points to identity and sociotropic concerns playing a larger role than self-interest (Hainmueller & Hopkins, 2014). We therefore hypothesize that individuals with more favourable perceptions of their security in general terms, job, terrorism, and civil war, would be more likely to support immigrant-friendly immigration policies.

- Hypothesis 3. The higher an individual's perceived level of security, the more in favour of immigrant-friendly immigration policies they will be.
- Hypothesis 3a. The higher an individual's perceived level of general security, the more in favour of immigrant-friendly immigration policies they will be.
- Hypothesis 3b. The lower an individual's worry about job security, the more in favour of immigrant-friendly immigration policies they will be.
- Hypothesis 3c. The higher an individual's worry about terrorism, the less in favour of immigrant-friendly immigration policies they will be.
- Hypothesis 3d. The higher an individual's worry about civil war, the less in favour of immigrant-friendly immigration policies they will be.

Other theories which contribute to the understanding of attitudes toward immigrants are the following. The human capital hypothesis asserts that those with a higher educational level will be more accepting of immigrants and immigration (Barceló, 2016; Hainmueller & Hopkins, 2014); political identification and ideology advances that those with conservative, or right-wing ideological leanings will have unfavourable attitudes toward immigrants and immigration; nationalism asserts that nationalistic individuals more likely to hold anti-immigrant and immigration attitudes (Kim & Kim, 2021; Rajjman et al., 2008; Wagner et al., 2012); and external events, how they are portrayed in the media (Schlueter & Davidov 2013) and politicized by leaders and commentators (Czymara & Schmidt-Catran, 2017) also affect attitudes toward immigrants and immigration.

The above factors operate in and are influenced by contextual factors which account for variations between countries in attitudes toward immigration (Davidov & Semyonov, 2017). Contextual factors include economic factors such as economic growth, inflation, unemployment rates, inequality, cultural factors such as area-embedded nationalism (Kim & Kim, 2021), and the composition of the immigrant population in terms of size (Schlueter & Davidov, 2013), socio-demographic, and economic characteristics.

## Measurement

### *Data*

The study analysed data from the Kenyan portion of World Values Survey Wave 7, which was collected in 2021 (Inglehart et al., 2020). The WVS has been carried out since 1981 to as a globally representative survey of social, political, economic, religious, and cultural values. The sample was nationally representative of all Kenyans aged 18 and upwards based on 2019 census population. It sampled all of Kenya's 47 counties with proportionality derived from their populations. The questionnaire was conducted through face-to-face interviews by trained interviewers. A potential limitation in the North of Kenya was that female interviewees had to be accompanied by a male.

### *Variables*

We base the dependent variable, immigration policy preference, on the question "How about people from other countries coming here to work. Which one of the following do you think the government should do?" measured on a 4-point scale as follows: (1) Let anyone come who wants to, (2) Let people come as long as there are jobs available, (3) Place strict limits on the number of

foreigners who can come here, (4) Prohibit people coming here from other countries. The variable measures attitudes toward immigrants in a concrete way by asking respondents their preferences in terms of real policy preferences and has been used in previous research (Barceló, 2016; Chang & Kang, 2018) as a measure of attitudes toward immigrants.

To measure trust, we use four variables. We base the general trust variable on the single question “Generally speaking, would you say that most people can be trusted or that you need to be very careful in dealing with people?” measured as a Yes/No response.

We base social trust on responses to the question set “I’d like to ask you how much you trust people from various groups. Could you tell me for each whether you trust people from this group completely, somewhat, not very much or not at all?” The variable then lists different groups of people. The responses are measured on a 4-point scale as follows: (1) Trust completely, (2) Trust somewhat, (3) Do not trust very much, (4) Do not trust at all. Social trust is the belief that members of society will act in accordance with social norms when interacting with others (Newton, 2001).

The second measures confidence in organizations, as responses to the question set “I am going to name a number of organizations. For each one, could you tell me how much confidence you have in them: is it a great deal of confidence, quite a lot of confidence, not very much confidence or none at all?” The variable then lists different institutions. The variables are measured on a 4-point scale as follows: (1) A great deal, (2) Quite a lot, (3) Not very much, (4) Not at all.

We performed an exploratory factor analysis on the social trust and organizational trust variables using principal component analysis with Varimax (orthogonal) rotation. General trust was not included as it is measured as nominal responses. The analysis produced four factors explaining a total of 58.51% of the variance for the set of variables, with a KMO of 0.890. Factor 1 was formed from the variables measuring confidence in the police, the courts, the government, political parties, parliament, and the civil service. This factor corresponded to trust of administrative and political institutions and was labelled ‘political-administrative system trust’ (Chronbach’s alpha 0.871). Factor 2 was formed from the variables measuring confidence in environmental organisations, women’s organisations, charitable or humanitarian organisations, the United Nations, and the African Union. This factor was therefore labelled ‘international and non-government institutions trust’ (Chronbach’s alpha 0.814). Factor 3 was formed from the variables measuring confidence in the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank, the World Health Organisation, and the World Trade Organisation. These organisations have power and influence which transcends national boundaries. It was therefore labelled ‘supra-national institutions trust’ (Chronbach’s alpha 0.831). Factor 4 was formed from the variables measuring trust in one’s neighbourhood, people one knows personally, people one meets for the first time, people of another religion, and people of another nationality. This factor corresponded to trust of known and unknown people and was labelled ‘social trust’ (Chronbach’s alpha 0.777). Factor scores for each of the factors were predicted and the variables ‘political-administrative system trust’, ‘international and non-government institutions trust’, ‘supra-national institutions trust’ and ‘social trust’ were created to be used in the ordinal logistic regression. The variables were grouped by type of trust for the analyses. General trust and social trust were grouped as ‘interpersonal trust’. Political-administrative system trust, international and non-government institutions trust, and supra-national institutions trust were grouped as ‘institutional trust’.

We base the variables measuring sense of security on two types of questions. The first is the single question “Could you tell me how secure you feel these days in your neighbourhood?” measured on a 4-point scale as follows: (1) Very secure, (2) Quite secure, (3) Not very secure, (4) Not at all secure. The second is the question set “To what degree are you worried about the following situations?” The variable lists situations related to different domains. The variables

**Table 1.** Descriptive Statistics

Variable	Obs.	Mean	Std. Dev.	Min.	Max.
Immigration policy preferences	1,246	2.537	.749	1	4
General trust	1,252	.096	.294	0	1
Social trust	1,222	2.999	.776	1	4
Political-administrative system trust	1,194	2.260	.715	1	4
International and non-government institutions trust	1,164	2.881	.820	1	4
Supra-national institutions trust	1,015	3.051	0.718	1	4
Neighbourhood security	1,258	2.909	.825	1	4
Job security	1,247	3.440	.898	1	4
Educational security	1,251	3.428	.912	1	4
Terrorism	1,255	3.184	1.067	1	4
Civil war	1,259	3.322	.948	1	4
Sex	1,259	.494	.500	0	1
Age	1,259	30.740	10.065	18	84
Highest education level	1,260	1.933	.745	1	3
Subjective social class	1,221	2.587	1.196	1	5
Income level	1,242	1.800	.548	1	3
Information from social media	1,245	.610	.488	0	1
Perceived respect for human rights	1,251	2.559	.862	1	4
National pride	1,250	3.374	.818	1	4

Source: Authors [Data source Inglehart et al., 2020]

are measured on a 4-point scale as follows: (1) Very much, (2) A great deal, (3) Not much, (4) Not at all. All negatively coded variables were re-coded for the analysis. <Table 1> shows the descriptive statistics for the main variables.

Control variables are included to control for socio-demographic and contextual characteristics as well as theories of immigrant acceptance. Included controls are: age; sex; highest education level, income, information from social media, perceived respect for human rights, and national pride.

### **Research model and estimation**

To examine the relationship between interpersonal trust, institutional trust, sense of security and immigration policy preferences, we estimated the following ordinal logistic model:

$$\begin{aligned} \log [P(Y \leq j)] &= \log \left[ \frac{P(Y \leq j)}{P(Y > j)} \right] \\ &= \alpha_j + (-\beta_1 X_1 \cdots - \beta_5 X_5 - \beta_6 X_6 \cdots - \beta_9 X_9 - \beta_{10} X_{10} \cdots \beta_n X_n), \\ & \quad j \in [1, J-1] \end{aligned}$$



Where:  $j \in [1, J - 1]$  are the immigration policy preferences ( $Y$ );  $X_1$  to  $X_5$  are the forms of trust making up interpersonal trust (general trust, social trust) and institutional trust (political-administrative system trust, international organizations and non-government institutions trust, supra-national institutions trust);  $X_6$  to  $X_9$  the sense of security variables (general security, job security worries, terrorism worries, civil war worries);  $X_{10}$  to  $X_n$  are the control variables.

We first performed factor analysis on the trust variables to derive factors for regression analysis, followed by descriptive analyses and correlation analysis were performed to explore the data. As the main method, we performed a series of ordinal logistic regression models with reported odds ratios using STATA 16. Model 1 tested the relationship between trust and immigration policy preferences while controlling for demographic characteristics and factors shown in previous research to affect public attitudes toward immigration. Model 2 tested the relationship between sense of security and immigration policy preferences with controls. Finally Model 3 tested the full model of trust, sense of security, and immigration policy preferences with controls.

## Results

The results of the ordinal models with robust standard errors are shown in <Table 2>.

**Table 2.** Ordinal logistic models

Immigration policy preferences		Model 1: Trust		Model 2: Sense of security		Model 3: Trust, Sense of security	
Type of trust	Variables	OR (Robust SE)	OR (Robust SE)	OR (Robust SE)	OR (Robust SE)	OR (Robust SE)	OR (Robust SE)
Interpersonal trust	General trust Most people can be trusted	2.948*** (0.690)	2.331** (0.572)			3.034*** (0.716)	2.507*** (0.621)
	Social trust	1.213* (0.121)	1.169 (0.239)			1.180 (0.122)	1.151 (0.125)
Institutional trust	Political-Administrative system trust	1.192 (0.117)	1.099 (0.116)			1.143 (0.120)	1.083 (0.120)
	International and Non-government institutions trust	1.082 (0.128)	1.155 (0.150)			1.082 (0.131)	1.083 (0.120)
	Supra-national institutions trust	1.500** (0.188)	1.483** (0.195)			1.527*** (0.196)	1.499** (0.201)
Sense of security	Neighbourhood security			1.399*** (0.109)	1.296** (0.107)	1.209* (0.121)	1.128 (0.120)
	Job security			1.018 (0.076)	0.998 (0.076)	0.860 (0.085)	0.865 (0.089)
	Educational security			1.070 (0.081)	1.107 (0.089)	1.117 (0.104)	1.122 (0.113)
	Terrorism			0.828* (0.069)	0.806* (0.072)	0.792* (0.089)	0.794 (0.098)
	Civil war			1.125 (0.079)	1.124 (0.082)	1.216* (0.122)	1.182 (0.013)

**Table 2.** Ordinal logistic models (continue)

Immigration policy preferences		Model 1: Trust		Model 2: Sense of security		Model 3: Trust, Sense of security		
Type of trust	Variables	OR (Robust SE)	OR (Robust SE)	OR (Robust SE)	OR (Robust SE)	OR (Robust SE)	OR (Robust SE)	
Control variables	Sex (M)		0.875 (0.137)		0.800* (0.093)		0.887 (0.140)	
	Age		0.995 (0.008)		1.000 (0.006)		0.995 (0.009)	
	Highest education level Secondary		0.778 (0.152)		0.708* (0.105)		0.766 (0.154)	
	Highest education level Tertiary		0.587** (0.220)		0.577** (0.095)		0.580* (0.129)	
	Income level		1.107** (0.043)		1.073* (0.032)		1.097* (0.043)	
	Information from social media		1.963*** (0.342)		1.722*** (0.234)		2.001*** (0.359)	
	Perceptions of corruption		0.950 (0.035)		0.956 (0.027)		0.956 (0.363)	
	Perceived respect for human rights		0.132** (0.121)		1.278** (0.091)		1.287** (0.120)	
	National pride		0.843 (0.083)		0.862* (0.063)		0.082 (0.085)	
	Observations		724	702	1208	1152	713	691
	Wald $\chi^2$		$\chi^2_5 = 45.09$ ***	$\chi^2_{14} = 80.64$ ***	$\chi^2_5 = 25.97$ ***	$\chi^2_{14} = 72.65$ ***	$\chi^2_{10} = 58.29$ ***	$\chi^2_{19} = 87.71$ ***

Notes: Odds Ratios are reported, with robust standard errors in parentheses

\*\*\*  $p < 0.001$ , \*\*  $p < 0.010$ , \*  $p < 0.050$

Model 1 tests the effect of interpersonal and institutional trust on immigration policy preferences. The results for the interpersonal trust variables, general trust and social trust, are as follows. For general trust, being trusting of others increases the propensity of being in favour of less restrictive immigration policies compared to those who are not trusting of others (OR=2.331) even when controlling for demographic and theory-based drivers of attitudes toward immigration. For social trust, a one-step Likert scale climb increases the propensity of being in favour of less restrictive immigration policies compared to the lower step (OR=1.213) when the control variables are not included; however, when demographic and theory-based drivers of attitudes toward immigration are included as control variables, the result is insignificant. The results for the institutional trust variables, political-administrative system trust, international and non-governmental institutions trust, and supra-national institutions trust are as follows. For supra-national institutions trust, a one-step Likert scale climb increases the propensity of being in favour of less restrictive immigration policies compared to the lower step (OR=1.483) even when controlling for demographic and theory-based drivers of attitudes toward immigration. For political-administrative system trust and international and non-governmental institutions trust, the results are insignificant.

Model 2 tests the effect of sense of security on immigration policy preferences. For neighbourhood security, a one-step Likert scale climb increases the propensity of being in favour of less restrictive immigration policies compared to the lower step (OR=1.296) even when controlling for demographic and theory-based drivers of attitudes toward immigration. For terrorism, a one-step Likert scale climb (being more concerned about terrorism) **decreases** the propensity of being in favour of less restrictive immigration policies compared to the lower step (OR=0.828) even when controlling for demographic and theory-based drivers of attitudes toward immigration. For job security, educational security, and terrorism the results are insignificant.

Model 3 tests a combined model which includes interpersonal trust, institutional trust, and sense of security on immigration policy preferences. The results for the interpersonal trust variables, general trust and social trust, are as follows. For general trust, being trusting of others increases the propensity of being in favour of less restrictive immigration policies compared to those who are not trusting of others (OR=2.507) even when controlling for demographic and theory-based drivers of attitudes toward immigration. For social trust, the result is insignificant. The results for the institutional trust variables, political-administrative system trust, international and non-governmental institutions trust, and supra-national institutions trust are as follows. For supra-national institutions trust, a one-step Likert scale climb increases the propensity of being in favour of less restrictive immigration policies compared to the lower step (OR=1.499) even when controlling for demographic and theory-based drivers of attitudes toward immigration. For political-administrative system trust and international and non-governmental institutions trust, the results are insignificant. The results for the sense of security variables, neighbourhood security, job security, educational security, terrorism, and civil war, are as follows. For neighbourhood security, a one-step Likert scale climb increases the propensity of being in favour of less restrictive immigration policies compared to the lower step (OR=1.209) when the control variables are not included; however, when demographic and theory-based drivers of attitudes toward immigration are included as control variables, the result is insignificant. For terrorism, a one-step Likert scale climb (being more concerned about terrorism) decreases the propensity of being in favour of less restrictive immigration policies compared to the lower step (OR=0.792) when the control variables are not included; however, when demographic and theory-based drivers of attitudes toward immigration are included as control variables, the result is insignificant. For job security, educational security, and civil war, the results are insignificant. Table 3 provides a summary of the hypothesis results.

For demographic characteristics and theoretical drivers of attitudes toward immigration: sex (male) is significant and negative (Model 2); highest education level (secondary) is significant and negative (Model 2) and highest education level (tertiary) is significant and negative (Models 1, 2, 3); income level is significant and positive (Model 1, 2, 3); information from social media is significant and positive (Model 1, 2, 3); perceived respect for human is significant and positive (Model 1, 2, 3); national pride is significant and negative (Model 2).

## Discussion and Conclusions

We set out to fill a gap in research on attitudes toward immigrants in three ways: First, we wanted to empirically understand which type of trust affects immigration policy preferences. Second, we included sense of security in our model, to consider the salience of perceived and actual threats in the Kenyan immigration discourse. Third, we focused on a Global South, East African context, which has rarely been the subject of previous research into attitudes toward immigrants.

Our findings confirmed that trust affects immigration policy preferences in a positive way.

**Table 3.** Summary of hypothesis results

Type of trust	Variable	Model 1	Details	Model 2	Details	Model 3	Details
<b>Hypothesis 1</b>							
The more trusting an individual feels of others, the more in favour of immigrant-friendly immigration policies he or she will be.							
1a	Interpersonal trust	General trust	Supported			Supported	
1b		Social trust	Partially supported	Without controls		Not supported	Insignificant
<b>Hypothesis 2</b>							
The more confidence an individual has in institutions, the more in favour of immigrant-friendly immigration policies he or she will be.							
2a	Institutional trust	Political-administrative system trust	Not supported	Insignificant		Not supported	Insignificant
2b		International and non-governmental institutions trust	Not supported	Insignificant		Not supported	Insignificant
2c		Supra-national institutions trust	Supported			Supported	
<b>Hypothesis 3</b>							
The higher an individual's perceived level of security, the more in favour of immigrant-friendly immigration policies he or she will be.							
3a		Neighbourhood security			Supported	Partially supported	Without controls
3b		Job security			Not supported	Insignificant	Not supported
3c	Sense of security	Educational security			Not supported	Insignificant	Not supported
3d		Terrorism			Supported	Negative direction	Partially supported
3e		Civil war				Not supported	Insignificant
						Partially supported	Without controls

This result broadly mirrors the results of previous research (Chang & Kang, 2018; Economidou et al., 2020). Building on Gordon and Maharaj (2015), our result suggests that the positive effect of trust demonstrated in previous research focused on the Global North may, by being shown empirically in Kenya, may be generalized to a Global South, African context. However, to make policy recommendations it is more useful to understand which type of trust is relevant to attitudes toward immigrants. The most consistent trust predictors of preferences for less restrictive immigration policy were general trust (a type of interpersonal trust) and supra-national institutions trust (a type of institutional trust). As expected from previous research (Mitchell, 2021), trust of others is a consistent predictor of immigration policy preferences. Someone who is trusting of others in general is more likely to be trusting of immigrants, and supportive of less restrictive immigration policies. In a context of distrust toward others, religious institutions can build trust and cooperation between people of different ethnicities (Adida, 2011). Results for institutional trust provided less clarity. Whereas previous research (Chang & Kang, 2018; Economidou et al., 2020) has found that trust in the political-administrative system positively

effects attitudes toward immigrants, this variable was not significant in our research. The form of institutional trust that had a consistently significant positive effect on attitudes toward immigrants was trust in supra-national institutions. In the Kenyan context, the lack of any significant effect for trust in the political-administrative system might result from a sense that government exerts little real control over immigration and does not have the capacity to manage it. Conversely, the public views supra-national institutions such as the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank, and the World Health Organization, as having the capacity and being responsible for the control and administration of immigrants. In Kenya, where refugees form a large proportion of immigrants, supra-national organizations are largely responsible for the functioning of refugee camps.

We theorized that sense of security would affect immigration policy preferences, based on the group threat hypothesis, in which immigrants are seen as a threat to physical, economic, and cultural security (Freitag & Rapp, 2013; Garcia & Davidson, 2013). Our results were mixed, with only neighbourhood security and concerns about terrorism affecting immigration policy preferences when the trust variables were included in the model. This can be interpreted as the result of an individual's lived experience. Kenyans who do not feel secure in their neighbourhood are likely already exposed to insecurities such as crime and harassment, and competition for resources which could be exacerbated by an influx of immigrants, while those who are secure in their neighbourhood may not experience any of these effects close at hand. Kenya also has a history of frequent acts of terrorism. It would therefore be expected that Kenyan's who worry more about terrorism are less likely to support immigrant-friendly immigration policies. However, any implications drawn should be treated with caution, given that the results were insignificant when demographic and theory-based drivers of attitudes toward immigration were included.

Our research was limited by a few factors. First, the data we analysed was cross-sectional, meaning that it is not possible to claim causality. We therefore recommend future research be undertaken with longitudinal data. We are also cognizant that countries of the Global South are heterogeneous in their culture, socio-economic characteristics, and other contextual factors. To reinforce our results, more research should, therefore, focus on countries of the global south.

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## Conflicting interests


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## ORCID iD

Alan Dixon Brown  <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-2379-4125>

Woo-Jin Shin  <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-0666-8709>

Jeong Hwan Bae  <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-2198-2843>

Jangseop Byeon  <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-9760-1715>

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