

Immigrants' Attitude towards the Immigration Policy Change in South Korea*

Hoiok Jeong ■ Myongji University**

<Abstract>

Are immigrants favorable toward the immigration policy in South Korea, or do they comprise a heterogeneous group whose members have different thoughts and orientations, depending on their immigration status and their experience of settlement in the new country? Focusing on the case of South Korea, this study hypothesizes that attitudes might differ depending on immigration status—that is, permanent residents and naturalized persons may not have the same attitudes toward the new immigration policy. This study also hypothesizes that the difficulty that one has gone through to obtain permanent status might affect one's attitude toward the new naturalization policy. Utilizing the *2012 Social Survey on Foreign Residents*, the results are first, naturalized persons are more likely than permanent residents to approve the regulation of naturalized policies; second, the more difficult the procedure for acquiring permanent residence status, the more favorable one's attitude toward the regulation of naturalization policy.

*Key Words: immigrants, South Korea, immigration, immigration policy, attitudes toward immigration policy

I . Introduction

The purpose of this study is to analyze the attitudes of immigrants toward

* This work was supported by the Ministry of Education of the Republic of Korea and the National Research Foundation of Korea(NRF-2019S1A3A2098969) and Myongji University Research Year Grant(from 2019 to 2020).

** Associate Professor. Department of Political Science, Myongji University
(E-mail: hoiokj@mju.ac.kr)

the immigration policy in South Korea. Are immigrants favorable toward the policy, or do they comprise a heterogeneous group whose members have different thoughts and orientations, depending on their immigration status and their experience of settlement in the new country? This study focuses on the case of South Korea because an interesting debate has recently arisen regarding the country's permanent residency and naturalization system. Since the 1990s, the influx of immigrants into Korea has begun to increase,¹⁾ reaching its peak in the 2000s, and laws and institutions related to immigrants' settlement process have been updated(Choi and Kim 2011). In the past, the national interest was given priority, and the immigration policy was discussed in terms of controlling and managing foreigners. However, starting in 2006, changes in the policy trend have occurred, and the government has begun to concentrate on the rights of and respect for immigrants, as well as the national interest²⁾(Lee 2008; Kim 2009; Choi and Kim 2011). The recent immigration policy has been extended to include a wide range of issues related to immigrants' social adaptation and integration(Choi and Kim 2011).

Under the country's current immigration system,³⁾ permanent residency is the right of an individual to reside permanently in a country to which he or

1) According to the Korean Immigration Service, currently about 2.4 million immigrants reside in South Korea(Ministry of Justice 2020). The many immigrants come from China(44.2%), followed by Vietnam(9.3%), Thailand(8.3%), the U.S.(6.3%), and Uzbekistan(3.1%)(Ministry of Justice, 2020).

2) Kim(2009) points out that South Korea has changed from a labor-exporting country into one with a major influx of migrant workers since the 1988 Olympics and that this is one cause of the development of Korea's multicultural policy. This influx of migrant workers has helped solve the problem of small and medium-sized 3D industries. Since then, the necessity of attracting specialists, such as employees in the IT sector, has emerged. It is primarily due to the positive impact of immigrants on the Korean economy that the country's multicultural policy has changed(Kim 2009). Nowadays, the two major foreign populations in South Korea are marriage migrants and foreign workers. Marriage migrants come mainly from China and Vietnam and, resulting from a government program designed to solve the problem of a low number of eligible Korean women willing to marry males in rural regions, while foreign workers are mostly from Central and Southeast Asian countries to fill short-term vacancies in the 3D industries(Kong 2010).

3) The information on the country's immigration system was retrieved from the website of the Korean Ministry of Justice(2012) and summarized.

she has migrated in accordance with the automatic qualification renewal procedure, provided that he or she has not violated the legally prescribed reasons for leaving the country (Ministry of Justice 2012). In 2002, the Immigration Control Act was amended to establish permanent resident status (F-5 visa) and allowed permanent residence status to be granted to foreigners who lived in Korea for more than five years. A permanent resident is granted a lower level of rights and duties than the citizens of the host country. However, permanent residents have no restrictions on their employment activities, and the reasons for their deportation are more stringent than those related to non-permanent residents. Consequently, out of the 36 legal immigration status options pursuant to the Immigration Control Act, permanent residence is currently the highest one that a foreigner in the country can hold. Conversely, the country's naturalization system is based on the Nationality Act, which was established in 1948. The requirements for naturalization are as follows: 1) "general naturalization" is the naturalization of foreigners who have no familial relationship with Korean citizens and who have remained in the country for more than five years, 2) "facilitated naturalization" is the naturalization of foreigners whose parents or spouse are Korean nationals and who have lived in Korea for three years or more, and 3) "special naturalization" is the naturalization of foreigners who have made a special contribution and who have at least one parent who is a citizen of Korea.⁴⁾ In this case, the period of residence in Korea is not required for the application process, and only a Korean address is needed.

Naturalized persons have almost all the rights and obligations as citizens. When comparing a permanent resident and a naturalized person, the latter can benefit from social insurance and basic living security, can participate in political activities, and has the right to vote and to be elected; conversely, a permanent resident does not have rights that are similar to those granted to a naturalized person (Song 2011). However, the fact that the requirement for permanent residency is similar to that of the naturalization is a systematic

4) The standards and procedures of determining a person who made a special contribution are prescribed by Presidential Decree.

problem. Immigrants prefer naturalization over permanent residence, as the former enables them to receive the benefits outlined above, even if they do not feel as if they belong to South Korea as great to decide to be citizens of the country(Ministry of Justice 2012). As a solution to this problem, experts have argued in favor of the “permanent residence right prepositive principle” –that is, that the acquisition of permanent status should precede the qualification for naturalization. In other words, foreigners should have permanent residence in Korea for more than five years before they are able to apply for naturalization(Song 2011). Accordingly, in April 2017, the Ministry of Justice finalized a plan to implement a foreigner policy that focuses on making the acquisition of permanent residence a precondition for applying for naturalization.

From an international perspective, countries’ naturalization systems can be divided into two groups: one that requires the possession of permanent residency as a precondition for naturalization and the other that allows applicants to apply for naturalization regardless of their permanent residence status. The United States, Australia, Germany, and Singapore belong to the first group. For example, in the United States, possession of a permanent residence permit is required for five years or more before one can apply for naturalization(8 U.S. Code § 1427).⁵⁾ Germany also requires permanent residency as a precondition for naturalization. The revision of the nationality law in 2000 led to a reduction(from 15 to 8 years) in the period of residence required for obtaining a naturalization qualification(Hansen and Koehler 2005). In addition, Germany requires immigrants who are applying for naturalization to be fluent in German.

Contrastingly, in other countries, immigrants can apply for naturalization even if they do not have permanent residence. According to the Nationality Act of Japan, naturalization can be granted if the applicant has had an

5) However, those who have been granted permanent residency through marriage to a US citizen are required to hold a permanent residence permit for three years(8 US Code § 1430). In addition, to apply for naturalization, an individual must be 18 years of age or older and should have no departure record for at least three months prior to the submission of the application.

address in Japan for five years continuously. As is the case in Japan, the United Kingdom does not require possession of the permanent residence status prior to applying for naturalization, and it is possible to apply for naturalization if one has been legally resident in the country for more than five years(Aleinikoff and Klusmeyer 2011). In Korea, as in the cases of Japan and the United Kingdom, it used to be possible to apply for a qualification for naturalization if the applicant had been residing in Korea for five years or more, even if he or she did not have permanent residence status. However, owing to the criticism of this system, the government recently made the acquisition of permanent residence a precondition for naturalization application.

These debates concerning immigration policy have made South Korea a suitable research case for the examination of immigrants' attitudes toward immigration policy. Therefore, this study examines immigrants' changing environment and investigates the factors influencing their attitudes toward the new immigration policy. More specifically, this study hypothesizes that attitudes might differ depending on immigration status—that is, permanent residents and naturalized persons may not have the same attitudes toward the new immigration policy. This study also hypothesizes that the difficulty that one has gone through to obtain permanent status might affect one's attitude toward the new naturalization policy. These hypotheses are based on social identity theory and the concept of compensation, which will be examined empirically using a rare survey data set on immigrants residing in South Korea.

II. Literature Review

Social identity theory argues that an individual's attachment to the in-group to which he or she belongs can lead to prejudice and discrimination against the out-group(Tajfel and Turner 2004). In addition, the theory suggests that discrimination may occur even when interpersonal interests are not

formed; the main aim of the discrimination against outsiders may be to enhance the positive recognition of the in-group(Iyengar et al. 1993). Consequently, according to the theory of social identity, when an individual understands him or herself, it is easier for him or her to identify as a member of a group rather than to recognize him or herself as a single entity and behave according to the values of the group to which he or she belongs(Hogg et al. 1995).

Similarly, according to Ashforth and Mael(1989, 20), "Social identification is a perception of oneness with a group of persons." These authors argue that social identification comes from the categorization of individuals, the distinctiveness and prestige of the group, and the salience of out-groups. Furthermore, Ashforth and Mael(1989, 20) point out that "social identification leads to activities that are congruent with the identity, support for institutions that embody the identity, stereotypical perceptions of self and others." Through the process of social identification, individuals maintain the positive distinctiveness of their own groups, in which they sometimes compete against out-groups and effectively limit the opportunities of other groups and their members(Esses et al. 2001).

Additionally, social dominance orientation, which is one of the major perspectives from which individuals perceive the world, can function as another mechanism by which inter-group competition occurs. Social dominance orientation is defined as "one's degree of preference for inequality among social groups"(Pratto et al. 1994, 741). According to this theory, people who are more social dominance oriented tend to favor hierarchy-enhancing ideologies, while individuals with a lower level of social dominance orientation are more likely to favor hierarchy-attenuating ideologies. When forming a hierarchy between groups, social domination orientation is inevitable and tends to regard such a hierarchy as desirable, resulting in the attitude that the group to which the individual belongs should be given priority and granted limited access to resources(Pratto 1999; Pratto et al. 1994).

Conversely, from a sociological point of view, it is argued that there are symbolic boundaries based upon which one can judge whether individuals

belong to the in-group or the out-group and that these boundaries may not coincide completely with the individuals' legal status (Lamont and Molnar 2002; Reeskens and van Oorschot 2012). Based on the symbolic boundaries discussed by Lamont and Molnar (2002), Reeskens and van Oorschot (2012) pointed out that natives may not define immigrants who have recently migrated to their homeland as members of their in-group.

In the course of migrating to new countries, immigrants experience a complex renegotiation of their cultural and personal identities, and they undergo extensive trial and error in the process (McNamara 1997; Schwartz et al. 2006). Thus, social identity theory can be applied to immigrants who have been undergoing identity changes. Focusing on perceived competition in determining individuals' attitudes toward migration, Esses et al. (2001) found that negative attitudes to immigration are due to the recognition that the influx of immigrants will cause the perceived zero-sum competition between groups. In addition, Esses et al. (2001) argued that the belief in the zero-sum system—as out-groups (outsiders) acquire more resources, the resources that are accessible to their own groups will be reduced—leads to discrimination against outsiders and competition between groups (Esses et al. 2001). Relatedly, Darley and Pittman (2003) maintained that individuals display a willingness to attempt to rectify harmful behavior when they think they are being harmed by others. The link between this argument and the work by Esses et al. (2001) supports the hypothesis of the present study, which is that naturalized persons are more likely than permanent residents to favor regulating immigration policies. This is because naturalized persons are more likely to identify with natives and may want a stricter immigration policy based on their thinking that permanent residents infringe on economic benefits that should be given to them.⁶⁾

6) That the immigration status can have varying impacts on immigrants' life is a well-known finding in previous literature (Cavanagh, Dalzell & Cauffman 2020; Cadenas and Nienhuser 2020; Rosenberg 2020). For example, Cavanagh, Dalzell & Cauffman (2020) found that documentation status moderated the link between neighborhood disorder and trust in police and courts. Latina immigrants who lived in desirable neighborhoods perceived the police and courts as effective, regardless of documentation status, however, undocumented women living in undesirable

Furthermore, the present study hypothesizes that the more difficulty an individual experienced during the process of acquiring permanent resident status, the more likely it is that he or she will be in favor of a stricter naturalization policy.⁷⁾ The second hypothesis can theoretically be explained using the concept of “compensation.” Compensation is a consequence of an individual’s specific behavior, which has a significant effect on his or her attitude and behavior(Baker et al. 1988). Compensation has an important meaning in organizations whose members receive compensation for performing their roles, and a virtuous circle is formed when members stay with and work for the organization(Wayne et al. 1997). Based on this structure, the concept of “distributive justice” is derived. Distributive justice means the degree of fairness that an individual feels with regard to whether he or she is being given the appropriate compensation for his or her efforts(Greenberg 1990). When considering the allocation aspect of the distribution process, if sufficient compensation compared to their input effort is not received, the individuals involved in the organization might form a negative perception of the organization, which leads to negative behavior(Wayne et al. 1997).

Wenzel(2001) criticized the equity theory, which suggests that a situation is perceived to be just when there is a balance in the input - outcome ratios of the individuals in an exchange relationship. According to Wenzel(2001), the shortcoming of the equity theory is that it assumes that an individual can belong to only one possible group. However, there are numerous groups to which an individual can belong; the equity theory, however, neglects the social dimension(Wenzel 2001). Wenzel pointed out that:

with respect to norms, goals and interests, the judge has to be considered in his

neighborhoods viewed the police and courts more negatively than documented women.

- 7) The difficulties and obstacles that immigrants experience in a new country can shape their life in a certain way. On their study on Latina women in the United States, Saleem et al.(2020) examined the experiences of structural violence, which refers to injustices in laws and policies within societies. The authors found serious psychological and physical consequences of structural violence.

or her social dimension, that is, in his or her salient identity as an individual or as a member of variously inclusive asocial beholder, but rather a beholder who socially defines him- or herself in the given social context. What seems to be essential is how the observer locates him or herself in the justice context and how he or she structures the situation correspondingly... (Wenzel 2001, 317).

In other words, "the social structuring of the situation and the self-definitional orientation of the perceiver towards the social context are crucial for entitlement judgments" (Wenzel 2001, 317).

Although the concept of distributive fairness is used primarily in public administration and business fields, based on social psychology, it can also be applied to the immigrant who is a member of the organization if the Korean society is regarded as an organization. Therefore, while the compensation—that is, the rights and benefits that are granted after permanent residency is obtained—is fixed at a certain level, the difficulty experienced during the process of obtaining permanent resident status may vary from one level to another; therefore, the distribution fairness perceived by each individual may be different. Given this situation, those who have suffered a great deal of difficulty in the process of obtaining permanent residence are less likely to feel compensated for their efforts and may form an attitude in favor of establishing a stricter naturalization system for fellow immigrants.

The hypotheses suggested in the present study should be considered within the scope of the general literature on immigration attitudes. The previous literature can be largely categorized as focusing first on native citizens' attitudes (Citrin et al. 1997; Scheve and Slaughter 2001; Reeskens and van Oorschot 2012) and, second, on immigrants' attitudes (Reeskens and van Oorschot 2012; Just and Anderson 2014; Kolbe and Crepaz 2016). First, Scheve and Slaughter (2001), who examined American citizens' attitudes toward immigration policy, argued that non-skilled workers tend to favor the policy of restricting the number of immigrants who are granted entry to the country. Moreover, the authors found that when individuals evaluate migration policies, they consider various factors, such as their own economic situations. Citrin and his colleagues (1997) examined the formation of public opinion on migration policies and the impact of economic factors on this

formation process. The authors found that the individual's economic situation does not play a role in the formation of his or her attitude toward immigration policy; however, the evaluation of the national economic situation and concerns about increasing taxes are the main reasons why a restriction on the number of immigrants is favored(Citrin et al. 1997). Meanwhile, Reeskens and van Oorschot(2012) analyzed the factors that determine attitudes toward the provision of welfare for immigrants in European countries and found that the majority of Europeans prefer if immigrants are given conditional access to welfare provisions. People agree with providing welfare provisions for immigrants who have worked and paid taxes, achieve citizenship. The authors argued that the "symbolic boundaries between 'us' and 'them' are more outspoken when a scarce pool of welfare resources is at stake among those who are the most vulnerable. Interestingly, this exclusionary tendency becomes even more outspoken in the face of a sizeable immigrant population"(Reeskens and van Oorschot 2012, 132).

Contrastingly, research has been conducted on the attitudes to immigration that exist among immigrants themselves. For instance, focusing on the different types of immigration status, Kolbe and Crepaz(2016) conducted an interesting study that analyzed the influential factors explaining the attitudes of immigrants. The authors hypothesized that the attitude of the naturalized person is located between the attitudes of the foreign-born and the native person. Their hypothesis was confirmed through empirical analysis, the results of which showed that the immigrant who has citizenship is more supportive of conditionally providing immigrants with welfare benefits than the immigrant without citizenship. These findings imply that when immigrants acquire citizenship, their attitudes become more similar to those of natives(Kolbe and Crepaz 2016).

Similarly, some studies have claimed that naturalized persons do not seek redistribution of resources and that when naturalized citizens acquire citizenship, their behavior changes(Just and Anderson 2014). For example, Just and Anderson(2014) analyzed the immigration attitudes of immigrants in 18 countries in Western Europe. According to the results, immigrants who formed bonds and had shared experiences with other immigrants had more

favorable attitudes to immigration, while immigrants who were formally integrated into the new society appeared to have unfavorable attitudes toward immigration due to their allegiance to their new country. In addition, newcomers who acquired citizenship were significantly less favorable about admitting new arrivals than noncitizen immigrants(Just and Anderson 2014). The authors also found that the negative relationship between citizenship and favorable attitudes toward immigration is stronger among individuals who are dissatisfied with the country's economic situation.

Because South Korea is the research case for this study, the literature on South Korean immigration should be considered. Very few studies have focused on immigrants' attitudes toward immigration policies. For example, Min(2011) criticized the fact that previous researchers have dealt with the policy implications of multicultural policies from the top, and she instead attempted to focus on how multicultural policies are being embraced by the immigrants themselves. She examined the attitudes of marriage immigrant women in South Korea and found that they formed a group consciousness and had a desire to become integrated into the host society as an active group rather than being unilaterally unified in Korean society through multicultural programs.

With the exception of very few studies, research on migration to South Korea has tended to deal primarily with the immigration policy design process and its application(Kim 2006; Choi and Kim 2011; Han and Park 2011; Lim and Park 2012) and have paid insufficient attention to the attitudes of immigrants. For instance, Lim and Park(2012) analyzed the attitudes of South Korea's multicultural policy participants, such as public servants, service providers, and experts. The results showed that the attitudes of policy participants were positive based on their expectations that immigrants would contribute economically and socially to South Korean society. In particular, the policies that were preferred by the policy participants—such as the strengthening of Korean language and culture education, support for social adaptation, and improvement of bilingual education for immigrant children—primarily supported immigrants' adaptation to Korean society. In a similar vein, Choi and Kim(2011) focused on the direction of South Korea's

immigration policy and support activities, and they paid attention to how the specific policy and support programs differ according to the various types of foreign immigrants: marriage migrants, migrant workers, foreign students, etc. The authors found that various policies have been implemented for different types of immigrants—for instance, integration policies for marriage immigrants and discriminatory exclusion policies for migrant workers.

For immigration policies to work effectively, it is important to pay attention to how immigrants respond to the policies. The literature on Korean immigration has not dealt sufficiently with this issue; therefore, an attempt is made in this study to empirically analyze immigrants' attitudes toward South Korea's naturalization policies. The present study suggests that the attitudes of immigrants after naturalization become favorable toward a stricter immigration policy because the naturalized persons have acquired Korean identities and have become assimilated into Korean society. In addition, those immigrants who experienced greater hardship during the immigration process tend to have a more negative attitude toward immigration policy because they do not feel that they have been compensated sufficiently for their efforts. The specific hypotheses are as follows: 1) naturalized citizens are more likely to favor a stricter naturalization policy than permanent residents, and 2) the more difficulty an individual experiences in the process of acquiring permanent residence, the stronger his or her support for the regulation of the naturalization policy.

III. Methodology

The present study utilizes the *2012 Social Survey on Foreign Residents*⁸⁾

8) I acknowledge that the data used is rather dated. However, to my knowledge, it is the best data available that contains suitable questions for the purpose of the present research. The present study focuses on the specific change in the immigration policy—making acquisition of permanent residence a precondition for applying for naturalization. The dataset has the exact question that asks the attitude toward this policy change. Furthermore, the dataset includes other questions relevant for the present research such as difficulty obtaining permanent residency,

which was conducted by the South Korean Ministry of Justice. The survey includes two subsamples—774 permanent residents and 618 naturalized persons—with the total sample being 1,392. The interviewers visited the respondents' households and utilized a structured questionnaire for each interview. The survey, which was conducted from August 2012 to October 2012, was one of the rare surveys in which immigrants in South Korea were asked about their attitudes toward immigration policies.

The dependent variable of this study is the attitude toward immigrants' naturalization policy. Specifically, "What is your opinion on the policy that requires obtaining the Permanent Resident(F-5) visa prior to obtaining Korean nationality?"(1 = strongly disagree, 2 = somewhat disagree, 3 = neither, 4 = somewhat agree, or 5 = strongly agree).

The following are the two independent variables: the legal status of immigrants and the difficulty experienced during the process of obtaining permanent residency. First, the immigrant's legal status was coded as 0 = "permanent resident" and 1 = "naturalized person." Second, the difficulty experienced during the process of obtaining permanent residency was measured by the following question: "How difficult was the procedure for you to obtain Korean permanent residency?"(1 = very easy, 2 = somewhat easy, 3 = so so, 4 = somewhat difficult, or 5 = very difficult).

In addition, the present study controlled for other variables that could influence attitudes toward the naturalization policy. First, trust in Korean society and trust in the central government were controlled. I measured trust in Korean society using the following question: "How much can you trust the Korean society?" I coded the scale with 11 points, from 0 being "not at all" to 10 being "very much." Second, trust in the national government was measured by the following question: "Would you say you have a great deal of confidence, only some confidence, or hardly any confidence at all in the executive branch of the national government?"(1 = hardly any confidence at all, 2 = only some confidence, or 3 = a great deal of confidence).⁹⁾ The next

sense of belonging to Korea, trust toward Korean society and so on. Therefore, despite the data used is not very recent, it perfectly suits the goal of the present research that investigates immigrants' view on the immigration policy change.

variable that was controlled for was fairness of law enforcement, which was measured by the following question: "In Korean society, how fair do you think the enforcement of laws is?"(1 = very unfair, 2 = somewhat unfair, 3 = so so, 4 = somewhat fair, or 5 = very fair).

Life satisfaction might influence attitudes toward immigration policy. Therefore, I used the question "Considering your economic status, job, health conditions, etc., how satisfied are you with your current life?(1 = very dissatisfied, 2 = somewhat dissatisfied, 3 = so so, 4 = somewhat satisfied, or 5 = very satisfied). The experience of discrimination might also influence the formation of attitudes to immigration. This variable was measured by the following question: "While living in Korea, have you experienced discrimination because you are a foreigner?"(1 = no or 2 = yes). Next, the sense of belonging to South Korea was controlled for. The question used was "How strongly do you feel that you belong to Korea?"(1 = not at all, 2 = tend to feel a bit, 3 = feel a bit, or 4 = feel strongly). The political efficacy variable was also controlled for. The survey asked respondents how much they agreed with the following statement: "People like me don't have any say in what the government does"(1 = strongly agree, 2 = agree, 3 = neither agree nor disagree, 4 = disagree, or 5 = strongly disagree).

Sociodemographic variables were also included. Gender(1 = female, 0 = male), age, education, and income were controlled. With respect to age, Miller and Sears(1986) argued that an individual's level of tolerance is enhanced by his or her experience because he or she continues to experience socialization as he or she lives. Thus, it might be possible that the older the immigrants, the more tolerant they are toward fellow immigrants and the more opposed they are to strengthening the naturalization policy. Education was measured by asking respondents to indicate the highest level of education they had

9) Of the total 1,392 respondents who were asked about trust in the central government, 491 responded "I do not know," which resulted in a large number of missing cases. We decided to substitute the "I do not know" responses with the average value of the responses(1.97) to include the missing values of the variable in the analysis. In this regard, many scholars have introduced "missing substitution" as a method of dealing with missing values(Raaijmakers 1999; Schafer and Graham 2002; Dodeen 2003).

completed, ranging from “middle school or below,” which was coded as 1, to “4-year college degree and above,” which was coded as 4. Income was measured utilizing the following question: “Considering the past 12 months, what is the average monthly income of your household before tax?” (1 = less than 1,000,000 won, 2 = 1,000,000~less than 2,000,000 won, 3 = 2,000,000~less than 3,000,000 won, 4 = 3,000,000~less than 4,000,000 won, 5 = 4,000,000~less than 5,000,000 won, 6 = 5,000,000~less than 6,000,000 won, 7 = 6,000,000~less than 7,000,000 won, 8 = 7,000,000 won or more). Additionally, the subjective class consciousness variable was controlled utilizing the following question: “Compared to ‘an average Korean household,’ where would you position your family’s economic status in Korea? Choose a number from the diamond on the right (lowest = 0 and highest = 10)”. Finally, this study included country-of-origin variables (China, Taiwan, Japan, USA/Canada, Thailand, Philippines, and Cambodia) with Vietnam as a reference category.

IV. Results

Table 1 below shows the results of the basic statistical analysis of the independent variables and the dependent variable, control variables. The dependent variable of this study is the attitude toward immigrants’ naturalization policy from 1 to 5, and as the value increases, they tend to strengthen the naturalization policy. On the other hand, the mean value of the dependent variable was 2.32, indicating that the responses to the strengthening of the naturalization policy were the average responses. The independent variables of this study are the legal status of immigrants and the difficulty experienced during the process of obtaining permanent residency. It was confirmed that the difficulty of the process of acquiring permanent status was 1 for the minimum value, 5 for the maximum value, and 2.91 for the average value. The legal status of immigrants is 55.6% for permanent residents and 44.4% for naturalized persons.

On the other hand, in the analysis process, several variables including the socio-economic background of migrants were set as control variables. First,

trust in Korean society had a value from 0 to 10 and the average value was 7.48, indicating that immigrants have an attitude of trusting Korean society on average. In addition, trust in the Korean government has a value of 1 to 3, with an average of 1.97, indicating that most respondents have a little trust in the Korean government. Next, the fairness of law enforcement in Korea have a direction that law enforcement is fair as the value increases, and the average value shows that most respondents think that fairness is fair. Next, the life satisfaction level was between 1 and 5, and the mean value was 3.19, indicating that respondents were somewhat satisfied with life in Korean society.

<Table 1> Descriptive Statistics

variable		mean	min	max	s.d.	N
Attitudes toward Naturalization Policy		2.32	1.00	5.00	1.09	1346
Immigrant's legal status		1.44	1.00	2.00	0.50	1392
Difficulty obtaining permanent residency		2.91	1.00	5.00	1.24	1367
Trust	Korea society	7.48	0.00	10.00	2.02	1303
	National government	1.97	1.00	3.00	0.63	901
Fairness of law enforcement		3.37	1.00	5.00	1.13	1305
Life satisfaction		3.19	1.00	5.00	0.97	1383
Experience of discrimination		1.72	1.00	2.00	0.45	1371
Sense of belonging to Korea		3.05	1.00	4.00	0.82	1322
Political efficacy		3.60	1.00	5.00	1.16	1252

Table 2 presents the results illustrating how the individual's attitude toward the naturalization policy changes according to his or her socioeconomic background. First, females are more favorable to regulating the naturalization policy than males, although the difference is not statistically significant. Among the age groups, the respondents who were most opposed to the stricter naturalization policy were in their 60s and above, and the age group that most favored a more relaxed naturalization policy comprised the respondents who were in their 20s and below; in other words, the higher the

respondent's age, the greater his or her opposition to the naturalization policy regulation. These results might be caused by the fact that due to their old age, those immigrants over 60 years old and above might feel more pressed about having to wait for five years to acquire citizenship. These results were statistically significant at the 95% confidence level. However, education and income had no significant link with attitude to the policy.

<Table 2> Socioeconomic Background and Attitude Toward Strengthening Naturalization Policy Regulations

		mean	s.d.	N
gender	male	2.27	1.10	368
	female	2.34	1.09	978
t-test		t =-1.116, p=0.265		
age	20s and below	2.45	1.14	313
	30s	2.34	1.08	363
	40s	2.33	1.05	374
	50s	2.18	1.09	220
	60s and over	2.13	1.10	76
	total	2.32	1.09	1346
ANOVA		F=2.658, p=0.031		
education	Middle school or below	2.32	1.13	436
	High school	2.35	1.11	535
	2-year college degree	2.28	1.00	145
	4-year college degree and above	2.29	1.04	221
	total	2.32	1.09	1337
ANOVA		F=0.231, p=0.875		
monthly household income	less than 1,000,000 won	2.22	1.16	157
	1,000,000 won ~less than 2,000,000won	2.30	1.07	433
	2,000,000 won ~less than 3,000,000won	2.43	1.07	343
	3,000,000 won ~less than 4,000,000won	2.36	1.07	138
	4,000,000 won or more	2.22	1.15	162
	total	2.33	1.09	1233
ANOVA		F=1.625, p=0.166		

Next, <Table 3> shows the results of the correlations between immigrants' legal status, difficulty in obtaining permanent residency, and attitude toward the naturalization policy. With respect to immigrants' legal status, naturalized persons were found to be more favorable toward strict naturalization regulations than permanent residents, and the difference was statistically significant($p<0.05$). The results also show that the more difficulties immigrants experienced in acquiring a green card, the more they agreed with strengthening the naturalization policy regulations($p<0.05$). These results indicate that a correlation may exist between the independent variables and dependent variable in the present study. Thus, in <Table 4>, I proceeded to control various variables and examine whether the effects of the independent variables on the dependent variable continue.

<Table 3> Correlation Between Main Independent Variables and Dependent Variable

	Attitudes toward naturalization policy
Immigrant's legal status	0.070**
Difficulty in obtaining permanent residency	0.069**

* $p<0.1$, ** $p<0.05$, *** $p<0.01$

According to the results of the ordinal regression analysis, the legal status of immigrants was significant, with naturalized persons being more in favor of the strict naturalization policy($p<0.05$). These results can be explained in the framework of the social identity theory proposed by Tajfel and Turner(2004) and other scholars. For instance, Esses et al.(2001) pointed out that individuals tend to limit the opportunities for others to enter their in-groups in order to maintain their particularity. In a similar vein, Iyengar et al.(1993) argued that discrimination against out-groups occurs to form a positive perception of in-groups. Based on these findings, it can be concluded that the stronger tendency of naturalized persons to strengthen naturalization policy regulations compared to permanent residents is due to the possibility that naturalized persons might become similar to native people in terms of their attitudes and group identity. Thus, compared to permanent residents,

naturalized persons might be more likely to impose a limit on newly immigrated individuals for fear that their in-group's resources will be taken away by the new out-group.

<Table 4> Attitudes Toward a Strict Naturalization Policy

		coefficient
Immigrant's legal status		0.308** (0.145) ^{a)}
Difficulty obtaining permanent residency		0.084* (0.049)
Trust	Korea society	-0.099*** (0.032)
	National government	0.099 (0.118)
Fairness of law enforcement		-0.063 (0.058)
Life satisfaction		-0.036 (0.070)
Experience of discrimination		-0.022 (0.133)
Sense of belonging to Korea		-0.058 (0.071)
Political efficacy		0.163*** (0.050)
Socioeconomic background	gender	0.179 (0.144)
	age	-0.026*** (0.006)
	education	-0.001 (0.067)
	income	0.081* (0.043)
	subjective class consciousness	-0.056 (0.040)

		coefficient
nationality	China	0.822*** (0.226)
	Taiwan	0.352 (0.351)
	Japan	0.767** (0.333)
	USA/Canada	0.508 (0.436)
	Thailand	0.398 (0.427)
	Philippines	-0.174 (0.341)
	Cambodia	-0.094 (0.378)
N		1035
Pseudo-R ²		0.093

*p<0.1, **p<0.05, ***p<0.01

a) standard error

Note: dependent variable(1 = strongly disagree, 2 = somewhat disagree, 3 = neither, 4 = somewhat agree, 5 = strongly agree)

The next main independent variable—difficulty obtaining permanent residency—was also significant, as hypothesized.¹⁰⁾ People who have undergone difficulties in acquiring permanent residency are more supportive of naturalization policy regulation. These results can be explained from the perspective of compensation and the fairness of distribution(Baker et al. 1988; Wayne et al. 1997; Greenberg 1990). Individuals might have differing experiences with regard to the procedure through which they acquire permanent status, and they might have differing perceptions of the difficulties that they might face during the procedure. Those people who have experienced more difficulties in the process might feel the need to be

10) I included the interaction variable between an immigrant's legal status and the difficulty of acquiring permanent status; however, the variable did not reach statistical significance.

compensated and that the fairness of distribution is not well maintained considering their input effort; this results in a negative attitude toward newly arrived immigrants.

Trust in Korean society was found to be statistically significant; the less trusting toward Korean society the individual, the more strongly he or she favors naturalization policy regulation. These results can be interpreted in relation to the fairness of law enforcement variable. It was found that people who think that law enforcement is unfair are more in favor of strengthening the naturalization policy regulations. This implies that one's perception of overall Korean society affects one's attitude toward immigration policies.

The political efficacy variable had a positive impact on the dependent variable, meaning that the politically efficacious are more likely to favor regulation of the naturalization policy. Among the socioeconomic background variables, age and income were significant. The younger and wealthier respondents tended to support the strengthening of the naturalization policy. Finally, among the nationality variables, immigrants from China and Japan, compared to those from Vietnam, are more likely to favor nationalization policy regulation.

V. Conclusion

This study analyzed the attitudes of immigrants toward the naturalization policy in South Korea. The main results of the analysis are as follows: First, naturalized persons are more likely than permanent residents to approve the regulation of naturalized policies. This might be because naturalized persons are more likely to recognize themselves as members of Korean society. As the theory of social identity suggests, after being naturalized, immigrants consider themselves as similar to native Koreans and are, therefore, in favor of the policy that makes it difficult for newly immigrated people to enter their in-group. Second, the more difficult the procedure for acquiring permanent residence status, the more favorable one's attitude toward the

regulation of naturalization policy. Compensation and distribution fairness theories can help explain these findings. The empirical results indicate that our two hypotheses were confirmed.

The finding that the immigrant's attitude toward the naturalization policy differs according to his or her legal status has a meaningful implication. Studies that have analyzed the behavior of immigrants have tended to assume that they are a single, homogeneous group. However, the present study showed that the attitudes found within an immigrant group are not homogenous but differ depending on the legal status of the immigrants. When examining immigrant groups, a more detailed approach to categorization and the comparison framework should be adopted to achieve a nuanced understanding. Additionally, the finding that the more difficulty immigrants experience in obtaining permanent residency, the more favorable they are toward strengthening naturalization policy might suggest that immigrants in South Korea have been given relatively limited rights and benefits compared to the input and effort that they have invested to acquire legal status and adapt to Korean society. There is a need to make immigration policy changes to expand the rights and benefits offered to immigrants after they have acquired stable legal status in Korea. By doing so, immigrants will feel compensated and will perceive that distribution fairness has been established.

Lastly, it should be noted that it is a case study of only one country -South Korea-, thus, the findings of the present study might not be generalized to other countries. Social identity formation and the evaluation of fairness may be universal phenomena, but how they will operate and interact with different social settings is a question for another research. Future studies should include more countries and should examine this possibility.

References

- Aleinikoff, T. A. & D. Klusmeyer. 2011. *Citizenship Policies for an Age of Migration*. Washington D.C: Carnegie Endowment.
- Ashforth, B. E. & F. Mael. 1989. "Social Identity Theory and the Organization." *Academy of management review* 14(1), 20-39.
- Baker, G. P., M. C. Jensen & K. J. Murphy. 1988. "Compensation and Incentives: Practice vs. Theory." *The journal of Finance* 43(3), 593-616.
- Cadenas, Germán A. & H. Kenny Nienhusser. 2020. "Immigration Status and College Students' Psychosocial Well-being." *Educational Researcher*. 29 September 2020, <https://doi.org/10.3102/0013189X20962470>(downloaded 2 December 2020).
- Cavanagh, C., E. Dalzell & E. Cauffman. 2020. "Documentation Status, Neighborhood Disorder, and Attitudes toward Police and Courts among Latina Immigrants." *Psychology, Public Policy, and Law* 26(1), 121-131.
- Choi, B. D. & Y. K. Kim. 2011. "Foreign Immigrants' Recognition on Related Policies and Supporting Activities." *Journal of the Korean Association of Regional Geographers* 17(4), 357-380.
- Citrin, J., D. P. Green, C. Muste & C. Wong. 1997. "Public Opinion toward Immigration Reform: The Role of Economic Motivations." *The Journal of Politics* 59(3), 858-881.
- Darley, J. M. & T. S. Pittman. 2003. "The Psychology of Compensatory and Retributive Justice." *Personality and Social Psychology Review* 7(4), 324-336.
- Dodeen, H. M. 2003. "Effectiveness of Valid Mean Substitution in Treating Missing Data in Attitude Assessment." *Assessment & Evaluation in Higher Education* 28(5), 505-513.
- Esses, V. M., J. F. Dovidio, L. M. Jackson & T. L. Armstrong. 2001. "The Immigration Dilemma: The Role of Perceived Group Competition, Ethnic Prejudice, and National Identity." *Journal of Social issues* 57(3), 389-412.
- Greenberg, J. 1990. "Organizational Justice: Yesterday, Today, and Tomorrow."

- Journal of management* 16(2), 399-432.
- Han, S. J. & C. S. Park. 2011. "The Impact of Public Policy on Social Construction of Foreigners: Comparative Case Study of Foreign Workers and Marriage Immigrants." *The Korea Association for Policy Studies* 20(1), 51-82.
- Hansen, R. & J. Koehler. 2005. "Issue Definition, Political Discourse and the Politics of Nationality Reform in France and Germany." *European Journal of Political Research* 44(5), 623-644.
- Hogg, M. A., D. J. Terry & K. M. White. 1995. "A Tale of Two Theories: A Critical Comparison of Identity Theory with Social Identity Theory." *Social Psychology Quarterly* 58(4), 255-269.
- Iyengar, S. & W. J. McGuire. 1993. *Explorations in Political Psychology*. Durham: Duke University Press.
- Just, A. & C. J. Anderson. 2014. "Dual Allegiances? Immigrants' Attitudes toward Immigration." *The Journal of Politics* 77(1), 188-201.
- Kim, M. N. 2009. "The Phases of Progress of Multi-Cultural Society and a View of the Policy: Multi-Cultural Policy in Korea and Advanced Nations." *Korean Journal of Public Administration* 47(4), 193-223.
- Kim, Y. R. 2006. "Women-Immigrants' Lives and their Social-cultural Accommodation-related Policy for the Multi-cultural Society." *The Journal of Asian Women* 45(1), 143-189.
- Kolbe, M. & M. M. Crepaz. 2016. "The Power of Citizenship: How Immigrant Incorporation Affects Attitudes towards Social Benefits." *Comparative Politics* 49(1), 105-123.
- Kong, D., K. Yoon & S. Yu. 2010. "The Social Dimensions of Immigration in Korea." *Journal of Contemporary Asia* 40(2), 252-274.
- Korean Ministry of Justice. 2012. *Survey of Foreign Residents in Korea 2012*.
- Lamont, M. & V. Molnár. 2002. "The Study of Boundaries in the Social Sciences." *Annual Review of Sociology* 28(1), 167-195.
- Lee, H. K. 2008. "The Shift in Immigration Policy towards Expansion and Inclusion in South Korea." *Korean Journal of Sociology* 42(2), 104-137.
- Lim, D. J. & J. K. Park. 2012. "An Empirical Study of Policy Participants' Attitude and Preference on the Multiculturalism and Multicultural

- Policy in Korea: Focused on Public Servants, Service Providers, Experts." *Korean Policy Sciences Review* 16(2), 29-62.
- McNamara, T. 1997. "Theorizing Social Identity: What Do We Mean by Social Identity? Competing Frameworks, Competing Discourses." *TESOL Quarterly* 31(3), 561-567.
- Min, G. Y. 2011. "A Research on Experiences of Multicultural Policy by Married Immigrant Women." *Journal of Social Science* 22(1), 83-104(in Korean).
- Pratto, F. 1999. "The Puzzle of Continuing Group Inequality: Piecing together Psychological, Social, and Cultural Forces in Social Dominance Theory." *Advances in Experimental Social Psychology* 31, 191-263.
- Pratto, F., J. Sidanius, L. M. Stallworth & B. F. Malle. 1994. "Social Dominance Orientation: A Personality Variable Predicting Social and Political Attitudes." *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 67(4), 741-763.
- Raaijmakers, Q. A. 1999. "Effectiveness of Different Missing Data Treatments in Surveys with Likert-Type data: Introducing the Relative Mean Substitution Approach." *Educational and Psychological Measurement* 59(5), 725-748.
- Reeskens, T. & W. Van Oorschot. 2012. "Disentangling the 'New Liberal Dilemma': On the Relation Between General Welfare Redistribution Preferences and Welfare Chauvinism." *International Journal of Comparative Sociology* 53(2), 120-139.
- Rosenberg, D. 2020. "Immigrants' Disadvantage Online: Understanding the Effects of Immigration Status, Gender and Country of Origin on the E-government Use in Israel." *Digital Policy, Regulation and Governance* 02 November 2020, <https://doi.org/10.1108/DPRG-06-2020-0071> (downloaded 2 December 2020).
- Schafer, J. L. & J. W. Graham. 2002. "Missing Data: Our View of the State of the Art." *Psychological Methods* 7(2), 147-177.
- Scheve, K. F. & M. J. Slaughter. 2001. "Labor Market Competition and Individual Preferences over Immigration Policy." *Review of Economics and Statistics* 83(1), 133-145.

- Schwartz, S. J., M. J. Montgomery & E. Briones. 2006. "The Role of Identity in Acculturation among Immigrant People: Theoretical Propositions, Empirical Questions, and Applied Recommendations." *Human Development* 49(1), 1-30.
- Song, S. Y. 2011. "A Study on How to Connect Naturalization with Qualifications for Permanent Residence: Requiring Permanent Residence as a Prerequisite for Nationality." *Journal of Legislation Studies* 8, 43-71(in Korean).
- Tajfel, H. & J. C. Turner. 2004. *The Social Identity Theory of Intergroup Behavior*. New York: Psychology Press.
- Wayne, S. J., L. M. Shore & R. C. Liden. 1997. "Perceived Organizational Support and Leader-Member Exchange: A Social Exchange Perspective." *Academy of Management Journal* 40(1), 82-111.
- Wenzel, M. 2001. "A Social Categorization Approach to Distributive Justice: Social identity as the Link between Relevance of Inputs and Need for Justice." *British Journal of Social Psychology* 40(3), 315-335.

국문요약

한국 이민 정책 변화에 대한 이민자들의 태도 연구

정희옥 ■ 명지대학교

이민자들은 이민정책에 대해 우호적인 태도를 취할 것인가, 아니면 이민자 집단은 개인들의 고유한 특성에 따라 분리되는 개별적인 집단으로서 동료이민자들에게 차별적인 태도를 보일 것인가? 본 논문은 이러한 연구질문에서 시작하여, 한국의 경우를 대상으로 이민자들의 이민정책에 대한 태도의 차이를 경험적으로 분석하였다. 주요 가설은 첫째, 이민 상태(영주권자 또는 귀화자)에 따라 이민자들의 이민정책에 대한 태도는 달라질 것이다. 둘째, 이민자 개인이 영주권을 취득하는 과정에서 경험한 어려움의 정도가 새로운 귀화정책에 대한 태도에 영향을 미칠 것이다. 본 연구의 두 가설들은 여론조사 데이터를 통해 검증되었고, 그 결과 귀화자들은 영주권 취득자에 비해 귀화정책에서의 규제를 더욱 지지하는 것으로 나타났다. 또한, 영주권을 취득하는 과정에서 더 많은 어려움을 경험하였을수록, 새로운 귀화정책의 규제 조항에 대해서 찬성하는 것으로 나타났다. 이러한 결과는 이민자들이 가지는 이민정책에 대한 태도는 자신이 처한 이민상태와 이주 과정에서의 경험에 의해 영향을 받는다는 것을 의미한다.

주제어: 이민, 한국, 이민자, 이민정책, 이민정책에 대한 태도

