

MEDIA MINDSET

Exploring How Media Coverage of Immigration Affects Attitudes Toward Immigrants in the United States

SYDNEY HONEYCUTT, ASHLEY MCLEOD-MORIN, ANGIE B. LINDSEY, LAURI M. BAKER, RICKY TELG & DALE PRACHT



BACKGROUND

With over 45 million immigrants living in the U.S., immigration is an important issue that receives significant media coverage. The purpose of this study was to understand U.S. citizens' attitudes toward immigrants and examine media exposure related to immigration. This research explored trusted news sources, frequency of news reporting, and framing of immigration news.



METHODS

 **1,527** ADULT NATURAL-BORN U.S. CITIZENS

An online, cross-sectional survey was conducted between March 11-21, 2022. Respondents were asked to indicate the degree to which they felt eight emotional responses when they thought of immigrants in the U.S. Media use was measured by examining exposure to immigration news, framing of news stories, and most trusted sources.



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THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Cultivation theory and framing theory guided this study to understand the connection between media exposure and attitudes toward immigrants.

RESULTS

Respondents possessed generally positive attitudes toward immigrants. Results from a bivariate correlation found a statistically significant relationship between attitudes toward immigrants and the framing of immigration news. Respondents were more likely to recall seeing negative news than positive news. Constant comparative analysis found that almost half of respondents considered a national news network to be their most trusted source of news.

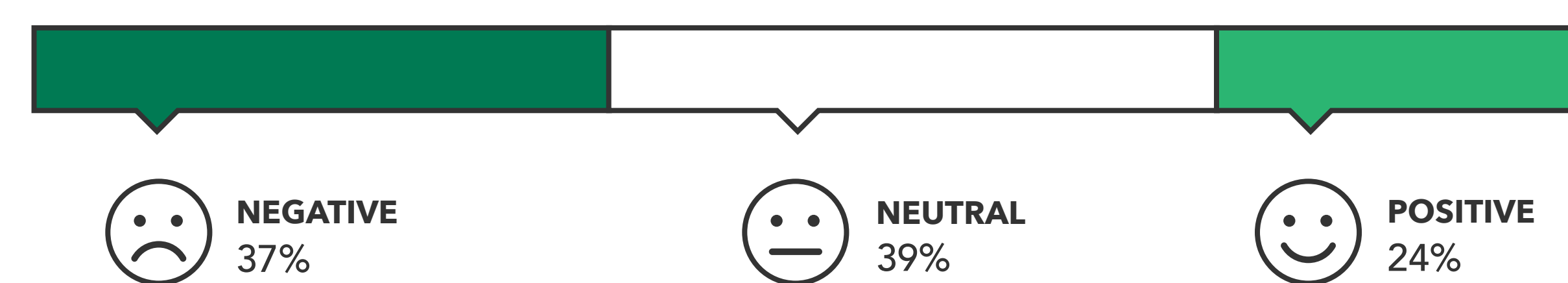


45% OF RESPONDENTS IDENTIFIED A **NATIONAL NEWS NETWORK** AS THEIR MOST TRUSTED NEWS SOURCE.

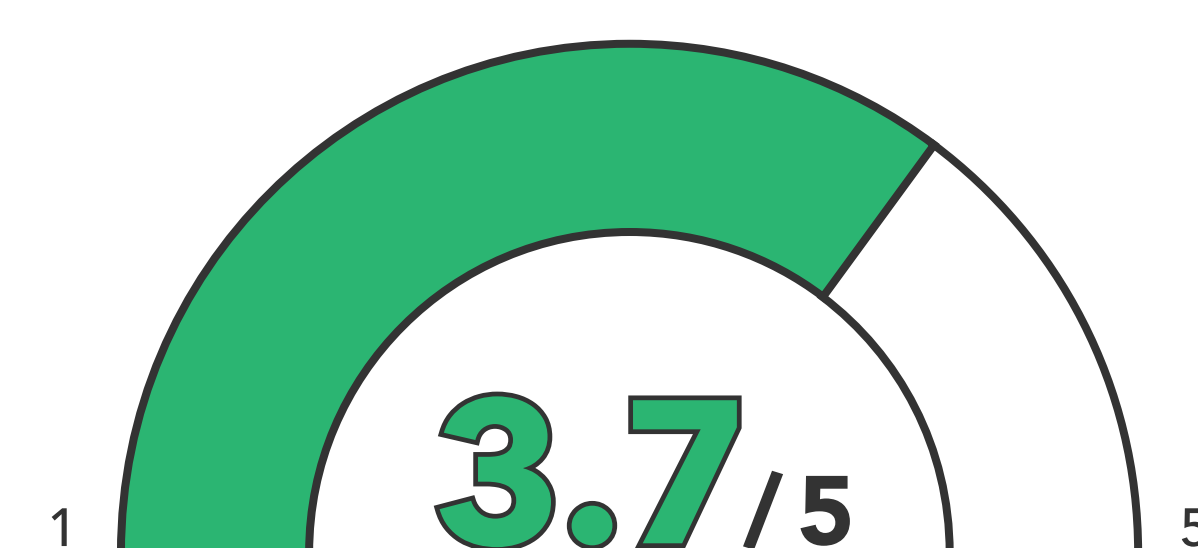
CONCLUSIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS

Findings from this study suggest that attitudes toward immigrants are influenced by the framing of immigration news. It is recommended that researchers continue to explore the relationship between news media and perceptions of immigration. The prevalence of negative immigration news highlights an opportunity for communicators to share positive messages about immigration.

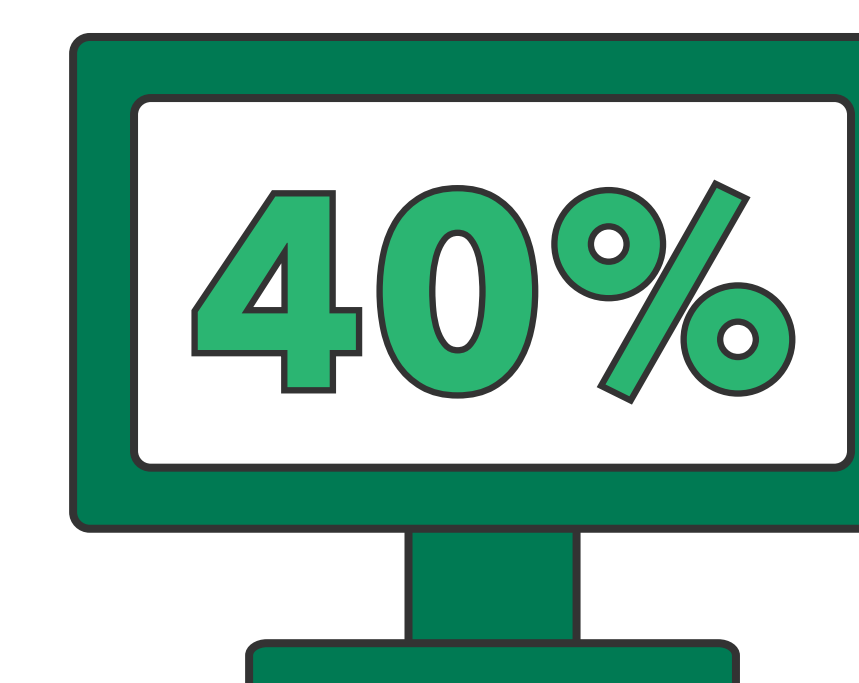
Think back to the most recent **news story** you saw about immigration. Was immigration portrayed as negative or positive in nature?



RESPONDENTS EXPRESSED **POSITIVE** ATTITUDES TOWARD IMMIGRANTS.



Measured on a 5-point scale (1 = negative; 5 = positive)



OF RESPONDENTS SAID THEIR MOST TRUSTED SOURCE REPORTED ON IMMIGRATION OFTEN OR ALL THE TIME.