

## BACKGROUND

Domestic violence (DV) affects millions of individuals across the U.S., yet is a significantly underreported crime. Formal reporting to the police depends on several factors, including a victim's relationship to the offender (Felson & Pare, 2005), making DV reporting a unique situation that is imperative to study.

Immigrants who experience DV face unique paths to both formally reporting their victimization to the police (Reina & Lohman, 2015) and utilizing assistance from victim support agencies, which may include challenges that US-born citizens do not encounter. These two factors may be the fastest and most supportive steps toward a victim leaving their abuser (Shearson, 2021).

## RESEARCH QUESTIONS

R1: Does immigration status impact the odds of victims of domestic violence reporting their victimization to the police?

R2: Does immigration status impact the odds of victims of domestic violence accessing support from victim service agencies?

## METHODS

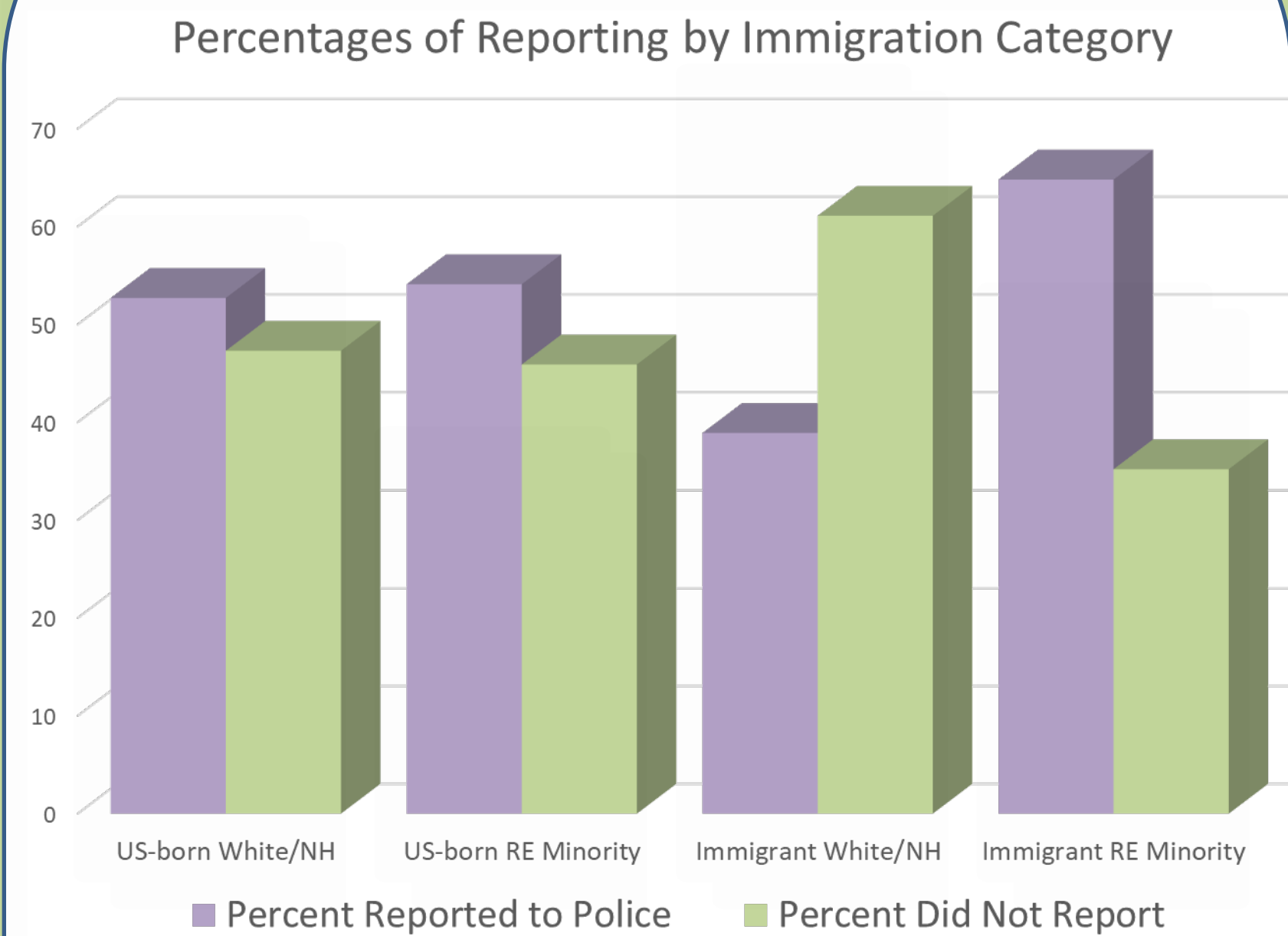
The current study utilized data from the National Crime Victimization Survey (NCVS) between the years of 2017 and 2023. I limited this study to adults who reported having experienced DV in the NCVS, with a final sample size of 2,746. Missing data within the final sample was minimal, with the variable with most missing values having less than 1% missingness.

Both descriptive statistics and binary logistic regression modeling was conducted using SPSS, with the main goal of testing whether immigration acts as a predictor for the outcome variables of interest. This method is most appropriate, as both dependent variables being tested are dichotomous.

The main independent variable of interest for both research questions is *immigration*, which was coded to include both citizenship status and racial/ ethnic identity. Based on previous study and existing literature, up to 10 other control variables were also included in the regression models.

Pseudo R-squares were analyzed using both Cox & Snell and Nagelkerke statistics.

## RESULTS



*Regression of Immigration on Police Reporting*  
 Results yielded 6 significant variables, including immigration. The odds ratio for this variable was 1.145, indicating that immigration status is significantly associated with a higher log odds of reporting to the police. Other significant variables included age (OR=1.011), no. of offenders (OR=.596), education (OR=.967), sexual orientation (OR=1.009), and weapon (OR=1.868).

*Regression of Immigration on Help-Seeking*  
 Results showed 4 significant variables, none of which included the independent variable of immigration. Significant variables included age (OR=1.015), education (OR=1.033), IPV (OR=1.641), and injury (OR=2.036).

## CONCLUSIONS

These results support the idea that immigration and racial/ ethnic identity are important concepts to consider in the context of reporting DV to the police. Particularly, immigration status is associated with a higher odds of reporting to the police. This may be because immigrants have more limited social networks and therefore see reporting as a necessary step toward receiving support for their victimization, as opposed to more informal help-seeking behaviors. As this study did not consider how naturalized citizens may differ as a stand-alone category, how third-party reporting may impact these results, or reasons provided by individuals who chose not to report, further study is needed to better understand the relationship between immigration and police reporting, as well as other help-seeking behaviors.

## REFERENCES

Felson, R. B. & Pare, P.-P. (2005). The reporting of domestic violence and sexual assault by nonstrangers to the police. *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 67(3), 597-610.

Reina, A.S., & Lohman, B.J. (2015). Barriers preventing Latina immigrants from seeking advocacy services for domestic violence victims: A qualitative analysis. *Journal of Family Violence* 30, 479-488.

Shearson, K. M. (2021). Seeking help from police for intimate partner violence: Applying a relationship phase framework to the exploration of victims' evolving needs. *Journal of Interpersonal Violence*, 36(3-4), 1745-1771.