

Attitudes Toward Unauthorized Immigrants, Authorized Immigrants, and Refugees

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Rates of human migration are steadily rising and have resulted in significant sociopolitical debates over how to best respond to increasing cultural diversity and changing migration patterns. Research on prejudicial attitudes toward immigrants has focused on the attitudes and beliefs that individuals in the receiving country hold about immigrants. The current study enhances this literature by examining how young adults view authorized and unauthorized immigrants and refugees. Using a between-groups design of 191 undergraduates, we found that participants consistently reported more prejudicial attitudes, greater perceived realistic threats, and greater intergroup anxiety when responding to questions about unauthorized compared with authorized immigrants. Additionally, there were differences in attitudes depending on participants' generational status, with older-generation participants reporting greater perceived realistic and symbolic threat, prejudice, and anxiety than newer-generation students. In some instances, these effects were moderated by participant race/ethnicity and whether they were evaluating authorized or unauthorized immigrants. Lastly, perceived realistic threat, symbolic threat, and intergroup anxiety were significant predictors of prejudicial attitudes. Overall, participants reported positive attitudes toward refugees and resettlement programs in the United States. These findings have implications for future research and interventions focused on immigration and prejudice toward migrant groups.

Keywords: immigrants and immigration policy, intergroup relations, prejudicial attitudes, perceived threats, intergroup anxiety

In 2010, there were an estimated 214 million people living outside of their country of nationality—a substantial rise from 150 million in 2000 (International Organization for Migration, 2011). This represents over 3% of the world's population, and numbers are growing exponentially. Estimates of migrants include individuals who have voluntarily left their homes in search of new opportunities, as well as approximately 44 million individuals who have been forcibly displaced due to persecution in their native countries (that is, asylum seekers and refugees; United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, 2011). Human migration is clearly occurring at unprecedented rates, and “immigration, cultural diversity and integration are among the most central challenges for modern societies” (Kessler et al., 2010, p. 985).

In the United States and many parts of the world, authorized and unauthorized immigration patterns have been highly politicized,

with widespread public discourse on whether to encourage or restrain human movement and for whom. Although the majority of U.S. citizens can trace their family histories to other countries, there has been a long history of opposition to immigrant groups (Diaz, Saenz, & Kwan, 2011). Attitudes toward migrants tend to vacillate over time, with several factors influencing public attitudes toward immigration, including both economic and noneconomic factors (Mayda, 2006). The literature, to date, has highlighted that “exclusion and prejudice are expected to become manifest when their [the majority's] collective economic, cultural, or religious interests are threatened” (Ceobanu & Escandell, 2010, p. 318). Yet little is known about whether public opinions in the United States, particularly among youth, vary in perceived threats and attitudes toward different immigrant groups (e.g., authorized immigrants, unauthorized immigrants, and refugees). Accordingly, the current research examines potential differences in prejudicial attitudes and perceived threats toward specific subgroups of immigrants among a college-aged sample.

Perceived Realistic and Symbolic Threats

Research on prejudice has largely focused on realistic and economic threats posed by immigrants (Ceobanu & Escandell, 2010). Realistic threats challenge the welfare of the majority group. For example, during times of economic hardship, immigrants may be perceived as a threat to scarce resources (e.g., jobs) and thus categorized as a realistic threat to host community members' employment opportunities and welfare. This is in line with demographic factors that have been linked with prejudicial atti-

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tudes, such as educational level (lower educational attainment related to higher prejudicial attitudes) and employment characteristics (e.g., unemployed, unskilled, and low-skilled manual laborers report greater prejudicial attitudes).

Symbolic threats represent challenges to the morals, values, and identity of the majority community. Issues such as perceived value differences due to culture or religion are considered symbolic threats that are perceived as threatening to the social fabric of the host community. Though perceived realistic threats, more than perceived symbolic threats, predicted prejudicial attitudes and beliefs about immigration (Mayda, 2006; Pereira, Vala, & Costa-Lopes, 2010; Schweitzer, Perkoulidis, Krome, Ludlow, & Ryan, 2005), some argue that there needs to be an increased focus on the role of perceived symbolic threats (Ceobanu & Escandell, 2010). Each type of threat may embody unique aspects of threat and should be considered in models of prejudice and perceived threat (Stephan, Ybarra, & Bachman, 1999).

Perceived Threat and Intergroup Anxiety

Perceived realistic and symbolic threats increase anxiety and influence intergroup tensions that may culminate in conflict or discrimination (e.g., Kamans, Otten, & Gordijn, 2011; Riek, Mania, & Gaertner, 2006). Therefore, an additional factor to consider in models of prejudice and threat are the affective dimensions associated with intergroup relations. The majority of research has focused on cognitive processes, whereas affective components have been relatively absent (Park & Judd, 2005). Nonetheless, more recent research has increasingly incorporated affect into models and analyses of intergroup conflict (Mackie, Devos, & Smith, 2000; Mackie & Smith, 2002). Stephan and colleagues (Stephan & Stephan, 1985; Stephan, Ybarra, et al., 1999; Stephan, Ybarra, Martinez, Schwarzwald, & Tur-Kaspa, 1998) focus on the role of intergroup anxiety as another aspect of threat, in addition to perceived realistic and symbolic threat and negative stereotypes, that contributes to prejudice. This research underscores that individuals may feel threatened when interacting with individuals from different groups and that the resulting anxiety predicts prejudicial attitudes. Research has found intergroup anxiety to be an important mediator between intergroup contact and reported attitudes toward an outgroup (Turner, Hewstone, Voci, & Vonofakou, 2008). In fact, a meta-analysis of 95 studies examining intergroup threat found that intergroup anxiety had the strongest relations to outgroup attitudes (Riek et al., 2006). Therefore, affective experiences are an important consideration for research addressing prejudicial attitudes and intergroup relations.

Cognitive appraisals and affective components have been linked to desire and intention to take action in relation to outgroups (Mackie et al., 2000), and research in the United States has tied perceived threats and prejudicial attitudes with attitudes toward specific immigration laws (Lee, Ottati, & Hussain, 2001) and changing economic circumstances (Diaz et al., 2011). In particular, the U.S. debate on immigration has largely focused on unauthorized immigration, with rising public concerns on the topic over the past decade. In a 2001 public opinion poll, only 28% of U.S. residents surveyed were concerned by unauthorized immigration; in 2007, that number had risen to 45% (Segovia & DeFever, 2010). In a 2005 survey, 44% of respondents endorsed the perspective that immigrants cost taxpayers too much and 49% reported that

immigrants “mostly hurt” the economy (Segovia & DeFever, 2010). Similarly, the past two decades have seen several policy proposals aimed to reduce access to social services by unauthorized immigrants. In the mid-1990s, California Proposition 187, and more recently, Arizona Senate Bill 1070 in 2010, proposed to restrict social services (e.g., welfare benefits, education) made available to unauthorized immigrants. Both legislative efforts spurred significant national debate over immigration policies and research examining predictors of attitudes toward comprehensive immigration policy reform (Diaz et al., 2011; Lee et al., 2001; see also Weisz & Marx, 2012).

Distinguishing Between Migrant Groups

Public discourse and empirical research on this topic rarely differentiate opinions and perceived threats toward different immigrant groups (e.g., authorized immigrants, unauthorized immigrants, and refugees), a key distinction in the current research. Instead, research has largely assessed individual's attitudes to broad social categories of groups, with “the implicit assumption underlying these between-category approaches is that prejudice and discrimination are distributed fairly evenly among members of a category” (Kaiser & Wilkins, 2010, p. 472). In response, research would benefit from examinations of variations within social categories and how these variations manifest in different stereotypic perceptions (Blair, Judd, Sadler, & Jenkins, 2002; Ko, Judd, & Blair, 2006; Maddox & Gray, 2002). For instance, research in the Netherlands suggests that community attitudes toward migrants vary depending on their perceptions of the immigrants' personal choice, or lack thereof, in the decision to immigrate (Verkuyten, 2005). Therefore, distinctions between voluntary and involuntary migrants may distinguish adaptation processes within the migrants (Zárate & Shaw, 2010) and also in host community attitudes and beliefs about adaptation, multiculturalism, and the legitimacy of particular migrant groups (Lynn & Lea, 2003; Verkuyten, 2005).

In parts of the world, refugee resettlement—a type of involuntary migration—has come under direct aim, with significant and ongoing debate over refugee resettlement and asylum seekers in other Western resettlement countries such as Australia and the United Kingdom (Louis, Duck, Terry, Schuller, & LaLonde, 2007; Lynn & Lea, 2003; McKay, Thomas, & Kneebone, 2011; Schweitzer et al., 2005). Similar to debates on authorized migration, issues related to refugee resettlement have largely focused on issues of refugee integration and attitudes toward diversity in the host society (Ager & Strang, 2008). Yet refugee resettlement in the United States seems to be largely overshadowed by unauthorized immigration debates; consequently, there is sparse data on U.S. attitudes toward refugee resettlement. Public attitudes toward migrants undoubtedly influences the postmigration experience; therefore, increased understanding of public attitudes toward refugee resettlement is important when describing the experiences of individuals who have been resettled in the United States. Further research is needed to determine the extent to which individuals make these distinctions across different types of immigrant groups.

Public discourse on immigration issues often place an emphasis on “differentiating the other” by focusing on ethnic origin, linguistic, religious, or physical appearances, with the host community

desiring migrants with acceptable characteristics comparable with their own ideals and norms (Lynn & Lea, 2003, p. 432). Empirical research has found that perceived similarities and differences between oneself and specific immigrant groups influence attitudes and beliefs. For example, Zárate, García, Garza, and Hitlan (2004) found significant differences in negative attitudes toward immigrants depending on the type of threat and whether perceived similarities or differences with immigrants were emphasized. They concluded that research on prejudice must examine, in greater detail, the ways immigrants are perceived as similar or different along different social dimensions that influence attitudes toward immigrant groups.

One major social dimension that may influence prejudicial attitudes is race/ethnicity. Although the race/ethnicity of both the immigrant and host community member may influence attitudes, little empirical research has analyzed this dimension (see Berg, 2010), and when race/ethnicity is incorporated into research, race/ethnicity of the perceiver is often partialled out. That is, researchers will either include perceivers of a single race/ethnicity or statistically control for perceiver race/ethnicity, hence glossing over important group-based differences in perceptions. Given that immigration is an issue that affects all members of a host country, it seems key to examine not only how different migrant populations are perceived but also whether these perceptions depend on perceiver race/ethnicity within the host community (see Weisz & Marx, 2012). Indeed, this sentiment is echoed by the growing trend within the stereotyping literature to examine the more subtle within-group variations in addition to the more blatant between-groups differences (e.g., Blair et al., 2002; Blair, Judd, & Chapleau, 2004). In light of this, it seems important to utilize a more fine-tuned approach that incorporates how different racial/ethnic groups perceive immigrant groups.

Along the same lines, there may be generational differences in attitudes toward immigrants. More recent migrants may see more similarities between themselves and other migrants, thus minimizing perceived threat, prejudice, and attitudes toward immigrants and immigration. Individuals whose families immigrated more recently likely have had greater exposure and social contact with specific groups of immigrants (Pettigrew, Tropp, Wagner, & Christ, 2011; Pettigrew & Tropp, 2006), thereby influencing their beliefs and attitudes toward those groups. An empirical question is whether, as individuals become more distanced from the immigration experience, they might become less empathic and more desensitized to the plight of recent migrants. Thus, understanding how different immigrant groups are perceived and how these perceptions may vary as a function of generational status has important implications for informing immigration reform policies and interventions to enhance intergroup relations.

Research Overview

The current research is guided by three primary goals that aim to expand understanding of attitudes toward different migrant groups. First, we directly compared participants' reports of perceived threats and prejudicial attitudes toward either authorized or unauthorized immigrants. Although theories of prejudice have guided research on prejudicial attitudes and behaviors toward immigrants, few studies have examined dif-

ferences in attitudes toward authorized and unauthorized immigrants simultaneously. Therefore, it is unclear if individuals differentiate between these two immigrant groups when forming opinions and attitudes about them. We hypothesized that there will be differences across conditions, with greater prejudicial attitudes, perceived realistic and symbolic threats, and intergroup anxiety toward unauthorized versus authorized immigrants. In addition, we examine whether the generational status and race/ethnicity of participants moderates their perceptions of unauthorized and authorized immigrants. Here, we hypothesize that individuals whose families migrated more recently will have less perceived realistic and symbolic threats, and intergroup anxiety for unauthorized and authorized immigrants, than individuals whose families migrated at earlier time periods (i.e., older-generational status, such as the fourth or fifth generations). Because of the acculturation process, we further expected that generational status would have more of an effect for non-White participants than for White participants. In other words, as non-White immigrants move away from the immigration experience, they may begin to take on the attitudes and beliefs of the host country (i.e., the United States), thus manifesting in more negative bias toward immigrants. Second, we examine whether intergroup anxiety, and perceived realistic and symbolic threats, are predictors of prejudicial attitudes toward these two immigrant populations. This analysis provides the opportunity to examine whether predictors found in the literature differentially predict attitudes toward authorized versus unauthorized immigrants. Third, descriptive analyses provide some of the first U.S. data on attitudes toward refugee populations. Because there is limited empirical data on attitudes toward refugees in the United States, we only assessed prejudicial attitudes to establish a baseline of public understanding and attitudes toward refugees.

Each of these analyses enhances our understanding of attitudes toward immigrants and refugees in a U.S.-based university sample. The research was conducted at a large public university designated as a Hispanic-serving institution along the U.S.-Mexico border. Therefore, the sample includes a diverse population of young adults in an area significantly affected by immigration debate and policy in the United States. Another benefit of using a college-age sample is that it may provide insight into how future generations will view immigrants and immigration in the United States. This insight may also help shape immigration reform policies and interventions to enhance intergroup relations so that they are more responsive to current and future perceptions of immigrant populations as well more sensitive to the immigrant experience.

Method

Participants

Between October and December 2011, a total of 201 undergraduate students from a large public university took part in exchange for partial course credit in their introductory psychology classes. A total of eight participants did not indicate their generational status, or did not know it, and two participants were identified in preliminary analyses as outliers on three or

more key dependent measures¹; these 10 students were not included in the final analyses. This gave us a final sample of 191 participants (157 females, 34 males).

The sample ranged in age from 18 to 33 years ($M = 18.93$ years, $SD = 2$ years). About half of the sample identified as White or Caucasian (47.1%); the remainder identified as Hispanic or Latino (19.4%), Asian (19.4%), Hawaiian or Pacific Islander (4.2%), African American or Black (3.7%), and 6.2% indicated "other" or did not specify their racial/ethnic heritage. The vast majority of our sample was politically liberal ($M = 4.40$, $SD = 2.06$), with 75.6% at or below the midpoint (5) on a scale of 1 (*liberal*) to 9 (*conservative*). The mean income range of the participants in our sample was \$30,000 to \$35,000 per household.

Procedure

This study took place online. Once participants logged on to the study Web site, they were randomly assigned to complete a short (approximately 20 min) questionnaire about either unauthorized or authorized immigrants, followed by questions about refugees that were the same for all participants. At the end of the study, all participants provided basic demographic information and then were thanked and debriefed. Participants were not allowed to complete both questionnaires.

Study Measures

We modified each of the dependent measures, described in this section, so that they were worded consistently with the immigrant group that was being evaluated. For instance, if a participant were evaluating unauthorized immigrants, then all scale wording referred to unauthorized immigrants. In the survey and original measures, immigrants were referred to as "legal" and "illegal"; however, for consistency and to use more accurate terms in referring to these two groups, we refer to them throughout as "authorized" and "unauthorized," respectively. The four measures (perceived realistic threat, perceived symbolic threat, prejudicial attitudes, and intergroup anxiety) included in this study have been extensively used in research incorporating the integrated threat theory of prejudice (Stephan et al., 1998). The constructs have been shown to be reliable and valid measures across numerous studies (see Stephan, Stephan, & Gudykunst, 1999, for a review), with several studies including the specific measures developed and validated by Stephan and colleagues (e.g., Schweitzer et al., 2005; Stephan, Ybarra, et al., 1999).

Perceived realistic threat. We used a modified version of the Stephan, Ybarra, et al. (1999) realistic threat questionnaire. This questionnaire consists of 7 items (e.g., "[Authorized/Unauthorized] immigrants have increased the tax burden on U.S. citizens") that assess the degree to which participants felt a threat to the physical, material, and overall welfare of their ingroup and its members ($\alpha = .83$). Responses were coded on scale from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 9 (*strongly agree*). All positively phrased items were reverse-coded so that higher values reflected greater feelings of perceived realistic threat.

Perceived symbolic threat. We used a modified version of the Stephan, Ybarra, et al. (1999) symbolic threat questionnaire. This questionnaire consists of 7 items (e.g., "[Authorized/Unauthorized] immigrant intake is undermining U.S. culture") that

capture participants' perceived differences in cultural values, morals, and socialization between themselves and these immigrant groups ($\alpha = .60$).² Responses were coded on a scale from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 9 (*strongly agree*). All positively phrased items were reverse-coded so that higher values reflected greater feelings of perceived symbolic threat.

Prejudicial attitudes. To assess participants' prejudice level, we administered the Prejudicial Attitudes Survey (Stephan & Stephan, 1993). This scale consists of six emotional (e.g., *hatred*) and six evaluative (e.g., *admiration*) terms. Responses were coded on a scale from 0 (*do not feel this emotion at all*) to 8 (*I feel this emotion extremely*). All positive-valence words (e.g., *acceptance* and *warmth*) were reverse-coded and then averaged with the negative-valence words (e.g., *hostility* and *rejection*) so that higher values reflected greater feelings of prejudice ($\alpha = .83$).

Intergroup anxiety. We administered an intergroup anxiety questionnaire (Stephan & Stephan, 1985) to assess participants' imagined discomfort and anxiety level when interacting with authorized or unauthorized immigrants. This questionnaire consists of six positive emotion (e.g., *at ease*) and six negative emotion (e.g., *anxious*) terms. Responses were coded on a scale from 0 (*do not feel this emotion at all*) to 8 (*I feel this emotion extremely*). All positive emotion terms were reverse-scored and then averaged with the negative emotion terms so that higher values reflected greater intergroup anxiety ($\alpha = .88$).

Results

Perceptions of Authorized and Unauthorized Immigrants

Analytic strategy. We used linear regression for all analyses. For each dependent variable (i.e., realistic threat, symbolic threat, prejudicial attitudes, and intergroup anxiety), we entered the predictors of generational status (entered as a continuous predictor, centered), condition (contrast coded, $-1 =$ ratings of unauthorized immigrants, and $+1 =$ ratings of authorized immigrants), participant race (contrast coded, $-1 =$ non-White and $+1 =$ White), and the interactions of these variables. Other predictors were also assessed, including political orientation, religious affiliation, gender, and primary language. None of these predictors had an effect on the dependent variables, thus they are not included in the final analyses.

¹ We used an analysis of studentized deleted residuals to determine outliers. This analysis is an index that allows us to test if an additional parameter is needed in the regression model in order to account for error in our predictions that is associated with a particular observation. Moreover, this index can be seen as an objective way to detect outliers, given that it provides a t -value for each observation. Put simply, an uncommon studentized deleted residual indicates whether "an observation is so extreme that it is unlike the other observations" in the data set (Judd & McClelland, 1989, p. 221; Judd & McClelland, 2008; McClelland, 2000).

² We ran follow-up analyses in order to determine why the alpha was so low for this scale. We found that the alphas differed between immigrant groups, with the alpha for unauthorized immigrants being .71 and the alpha for authorized immigrants being .42. We also examined whether the alphas differed between participant race (non-White, $\alpha = .57$; White, $\alpha = .63$) and whether the alphas differed by immigrant group and participants race. This analysis revealed that whereas the alpha for White participants' ratings of unauthorized immigrants was acceptable (.76), the alphas for the other three groups were not (ranging from .37 to .68).

Perceived realistic threat. Results revealed an effect of condition such that participants' realistic threat scores were higher when answering questions about unauthorized relative to authorized immigrants, $\beta = -.90$, $t(183) = 7.43$, $p < .01$, $\eta_2 = .23$. We found an effect of generational status, $\beta = .23$, $t(183) = 2.85$, $p < .01$, $\eta_2 = .04$, indicating that realistic threat scores increased as generational status increased. There was also a significant interaction of generational status and participant race, $\beta = -.25$, $t(183) = 3.14$, $p < .01$, $\eta_2 = .05$, such that difference between White and non-White participants' realistic threat scores was larger among newer-generation than older-generation participants (see Figure 1). Simple effects further revealed that, at one standard deviation below the mean of generational status, White participants ($M = 5.07$) had higher realistic threat scores than did non-White participants ($M = 4.11$), $\beta = .48$, $t(183) = 2.61$, $p = .01$, $\eta_2 = .04$. At one standard deviation above the mean of generational status, we found that White participants ($M = 5.00$) had lower realistic threat scores than did non-White participants ($M = 5.60$) participants, $\beta = -.29$, $t(183) = 1.82$, $p = .07$, $\eta_2 = .02$. No other effects were significant (see Table 1).

Perceived symbolic threat. The only effect to emerge was for generational status, revealing that as generational status increased participants' symbolic threat scores also increased, $\beta = .15$, $t(183) = 2.51$, $p = .01$, $\eta_2 = .03$. All other effects were not significant (see Table 2). Given the low alpha for the composite symbolic threat measure ($\alpha = .60$), it is possible that our lack of effects was due to the majority of scale items "interfering" with any symbolic threat differences in perceptions of unauthorized and authorized immigrants. Additionally, it is possible that because our sample was college-aged, they may have differing views and beliefs about symbolic threats than samples of middle-aged or older adults.

Intergroup anxiety. We found an effect of condition indicating that participants would feel more intergroup anxiety when interacting with unauthorized compared with authorized immigrants, $\beta = -.40$, $t(182) = -3.94$, $p < .01$, $\eta_2 = .08$.³ There was an effect of generational status, $\beta = .18$, $t(182) = 2.70$, $p < .01$, $\eta_2 = .04$, such that as generational status increased, participants indicated that they would feel more intergroup anxiety. We also found a marginal three-way interaction, $\beta = -.12$, $t(182) = -1.75$, $p = .08$, $\eta_2 = .02$ (see Figure 2). To interpret this interaction, we

first examined the simple two-way interaction of participant race and condition at one standard deviation above and below the mean of generational status. At one standard deviation below the mean, the two-way interaction was marginal, $\beta = .29$, $t(182) = 1.85$, $p < .07$, $\eta_2 = .02$, such that the difference between non-White participants' intergroup anxiety scores was larger when rating authorized ($M = 2.00$) compared with unauthorized ($M = 3.31$) immigrants, but for White participants, there was no difference in their intergroup anxiety scores when rating authorized ($M = 2.82$) versus unauthorized ($M = 2.99$) immigrants. At one standard deviation above the mean, the two-way interaction was not significant (see Table 3).

Prejudicial attitudes predicted by threats and intergroup anxiety. As a final examination, we ran a hierarchical regression analysis. In Step 1, we predicted prejudicial attitudes from condition (contrast-coded), participant race (contrast-coded), and generational status (centered). In Step 2, we predicted prejudicial attitudes from the centered versions of perceived realistic threat, perceived symbolic threat, and intergroup anxiety to examine whether these variables independently predicted prejudicial attitudes over and above the Step 1 variables. Table 4 provides the regression output for this analysis.

Step 1 was significant, $R^2 = .16$, $F(3, 186) = 11.63$, $p < .01$. We found that condition predicted prejudicial attitudes, such that participants were more prejudiced toward unauthorized than authorized immigrants, $\beta = -.47$, $t(186) = -5.10$, $p < .01$, $\eta_2 = .12$. Generational status was also a significant predictor of prejudicial attitudes, with older-generation participants holding more prejudicial attitudes toward immigrants than newer generational participants, $\beta = .19$, $t(186) = 2.73$, $p < .01$, $\eta_2 = .04$. Participant race was not a significant predictor of prejudicial attitudes.

In Step 2, we entered perceived realistic threat, perceived symbolic threat, and intergroup anxiety, and found that the addition of these three predictors significantly increased the variance accounted for by the model, $\Delta R^2 = .38$, $F(3, 183) = 50.67$, $p < .01$. Consistent with expectations, we found that perceived realistic threat predicted prejudicial attitudes, $\beta = .26$, $t(183) = 4.58$, $p < .01$, $\eta_2 = .10$, such that higher perceived realistic threat scores predicted greater prejudicial attitudes toward immigrants. Perceived symbolic threat predicted prejudicial attitudes, $\beta = .30$, $t(183) = 3.90$, $p < .01$, $\eta_2 = .08$, indicating that as perceived symbolic threat increased, so did participants' prejudice toward immigrants. And finally, we found that intergroup anxiety predicted prejudicial attitudes, $\beta = .33$, $t(183) = 5.00$, $p < .01$, $\eta_2 = .12$, demonstrating that higher intergroup anxiety scores were indicative of more prejudice toward immigrants. Participant race, condition, and generational status were no longer significant predictors of prejudicial attitudes in the final model.

Perceptions of Refugees

Next, we examined whether participants felt that the United States should accept refugees into the country as well as whether they harbored prejudicial attitudes toward refugees. These analyses included all 191 participants who completed either the unauthor-

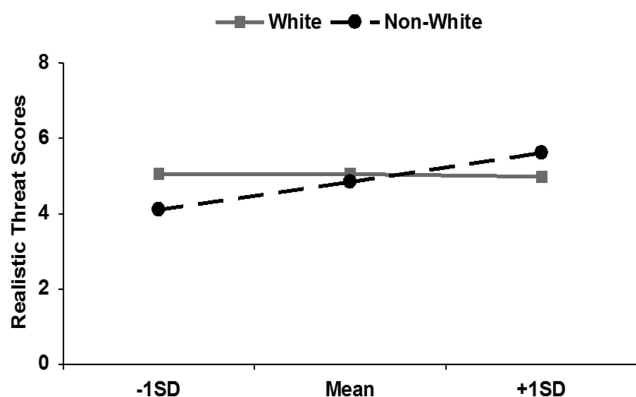


Figure 1. Chart of simple slopes as a function of the interaction of participant race and generational status.

³ The degrees of freedom for the analysis on participants' intergroup anxiety scores is lower because one participant did not complete this measure.

Table 1
*Output From Linear Regression Predicting Perceived Realistic Threat From Condition,
 Participant Race, Generational Status, and Their Interactions*

Variable	B	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	95% CI	Partial eta squared
Constant	4.94	40.70	< .001	[4.70, 5.18]	.90
Condition	-.90	-7.43	< .001	[-1.14, -.66]	.23
Participant race	.09	.78	.44	[-.14, .33]	.00
Generational status (centered)	.23	2.85	.005	[.07, .38]	.04
Condition × Participant Race	-.13	-1.09	.28	[-.37, .11]	.01
Generational Status × Participant Race	-.25	3.14	.002	[-.40, -.09]	.05
Generational Status × Condition	-.02	-.29	.77	[-.18, .13]	.00
Generational Status × Participant Race × Condition	-.08	-1.03	.31	[-.24, .08]	.01

Note. Condition was contrast-coded, -1 = ratings of unauthorized immigrants, and +1 = ratings of authorized immigrants. Participant race was contrast-coded, -1 = non-White, and +1 = White. *B* = unstandardized coefficient; CI = confidence interval.

ized or authorized immigrant survey, and all contrast codes were consistent across the sets of analyses.

Our first analysis examined participants' endorsement of the statement, "Do you think the United States should accept refugees into the country?" Responses were recorded on a scale from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 9 (*strongly agree*) scale. Participants' response to the endorsement statement was entered onto generational status and participant race, and their interaction. Condition was also entered into the model to control for any influence that may have occurred from participants having rated the two immigrant groups previously.

Accept refugees. This analysis revealed a marginal effect of generational status, $\beta = -.22$, $t(185) = -1.86$, $p = .06$, $\eta_2 = .02$, such that as generational status increased, participants became less accepting of refugees.⁴ Interestingly, there was no effect of participant race, nor was there a Participant Race by Generational Status interaction. Importantly, and as expected, there was no effect of condition, $\beta = .06$, $t(185) = .39$, $p > .69$.

Prejudice toward refugees. Using Stephan et al.'s (1998) Prejudicial Attitudes Survey, we next assessed whether participants harbored prejudicial attitudes toward refugees. Again, we entered participants' prejudicial attitudes scores onto generational status and participant race and their interaction, while controlling for condition. This analysis revealed an effect for generational status, $\beta = .19$, $t(186) = 2.72$, $p < .01$, $\eta_2 = .04$, such that as generational status increased, participants become more prejudiced toward refugees. We also found a marginally significant interaction of participant race and generational status, $\beta = -.12$, $t(186) = -1.77$, $p < .08$, $\eta_2 = .02$, indicating that the difference in prejudicial attitudes between White and non-White participants was larger among older-generation compared with newer-generation participants. Simple effects further revealed that, at one standard deviation below the mean of generational status, White participants' ($M = 2.25$) prejudicial attitude scores did not differ from non-White participants' ($M = 2.19$) scores, $\beta = .03$, $t(186) = .19$, $p > .84$. At one standard deviation above the mean of generational status, we found that White participants ($M = 2.45$) had lower prejudicial attitude scores than did non-White ($M = 3.15$) participants, $\beta = -.35$, $t(186) = -2.46$, $p < .02$, $\eta_2 = .03$. As expected, there was no effect of condition, $\beta = -.04$, $t(178) = -.39$, $p > .69$.

Discussion

The current study underscores significant differences in attitudes toward and beliefs about distinct immigrant groups that vary depending on participant demographic characteristics. Using a between-groups design, participants consistently reported greater perceived realistic threats and greater intergroup anxiety when responding to questions about unauthorized compared with authorized immigrants. Moreover, participants' generational status significantly predicted symbolic threats and intergroup anxiety, with individuals whose families immigrated more recently reporting less anxiety and lower perceived symbolic threats. For realistic threats, the effects of generation were moderated by participant race/ethnicity, with non-White participants reporting lower perceived realistic threats than Whites when their families recently immigrated, but greater perceived realistic threat when their families were more removed from the immigration process (i.e., older-generational status). The varying responses across generational status, race/ethnicity, and when distinguishing authorized and unauthorized immigrants—factors largely overlooked in previous research on the topic—are important findings in the current research.

The current research supports previous findings on the importance of perceived realistic threat, symbolic threat, and intergroup anxiety in predicting prejudicial attitudes (Schweitzer et al., 2005; Stephan, Ybarra, et al., 1999), but shows that these effects hold true whether evaluating authorized or unauthorized immigrants. In particular, the measures of realistic threat and intergroup anxiety had high levels of internal reliability and were significant predictors of prejudicial attitudes across different immigrant groups. The measure of symbolic threats had lower levels of internal reliability in the current sample but was still a significant predictor of prejudice toward immigrants. The instability of symbolic threat may indicate inadequate measurement of the construct, such that university students have a less coherent conception of "American" ideals and values than other samples in which the measure has been previously used.

⁴ The degrees of freedom for the analysis on the accept refugee statement is lower because one participant did not answer this statement.

Table 2
Output From Linear Regression Predicting Perceived Symbolic Threat From Condition, Participant Race, Generational Status, and Their Interactions

Variable	B	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	95% CI	Partial eta squared
Constant	4.95	53.04	< .001	[4.76, 5.13]	.94
Condition	.01	.09	.93	[-.18, .19]	.00
Participant race	-.06	-.67	.50	[-.25, .12]	.00
Generational status (centered)	.15	2.51	.01	[.03, .27]	.03
Condition × Participant Race	.06	.61	.54	[-.13, .24]	.00
Generational Status × Participant Race	-.06	-.97	.34	[-.18, .06]	.01
Generational Status × Condition	-.09	-1.49	.14	[-.21, .03]	.01
Generational Status × Participant Race × Condition	-.06	-1.00	.32	[-.18, .06]	.01

Note. Condition was contrast-coded, -1 = ratings of unauthorized immigrants, and +1 = ratings of authorized immigrants. Participant race was contrast-coded, -1 = non-White, and +1 = White. *B* = unstandardized coefficient; CI = confidence interval.

Although demographic variables reported elsewhere were not significant in the current study (e.g., gender, political orientation), generational status was a consistent predictor of attitudes toward authorized and unauthorized immigrants. Individuals whose families immigrated a longer time ago reported greater perceived symbolic threat and greater intergroup anxiety than individuals whose families immigrated more recently. However, when predicting realistic threat, White participants reported relatively stable attitudes toward authorized and unauthorized immigrants across generational status, whereas non-White participants reported lower perceived realistic threat when their families had immigrated more recently (i.e., newer-generational status). In other words, non-White participants may begin to adopt the host country's attitudes (those of a majority White culture) toward immigrants the longer they live in the United States, essentially amounting to what could be considered complete immersion or assimilation into the host culture.

Generational differences in attitudes correspond with intergroup contact theories, where individuals whose families immigrated more recently likely have had greater positive exposure and social contact with immigrants (Pettigrew, Tropp, Wagner, & Christ, 2011; Pettigrew & Tropp, 2006). The results of this research indicate that generational status may be an important moderator and should be included in research on the topic. Here, we found that the effect of generational status was particularly important for

racial/ethnic minority participants and further research is warranted. The importance of generational status also has implications for interventions and targeted efforts to reduce prejudicial attitudes among specific subgroups.

The effect of generational status, race/ethnicity, and condition did not hold when examining attitudes toward refugee resettlement, where the majority of participants reported positive attitudes toward refugees and a general endorsement of the refugee resettlement program. This is in contrast with debates over refugee resettlement elsewhere in the world (Murray, 2010) and suggests a general sense of support for refugee resettlement in the United States relative to other immigration policies. The findings across the three groups suggest that refugees and other authorized immigrants are not the focal groups in ongoing immigration debates. Instead, unauthorized immigrants in the United States have been identified as the threatening migrant group and target for greater prejudicial attitudes. To our knowledge, this is the first study differentiating these three groups, and further research in diverse geographic locations in the United States is needed.

The current research was conducted along the U.S.-Mexico border region, an area at the heart of the current immigration debate. Although the attitudes of participants surveyed in the current study may not be the same as attitudes among participants located in other parts of the United States, we anticipate the participants in the study are well aware of issues related to immi-

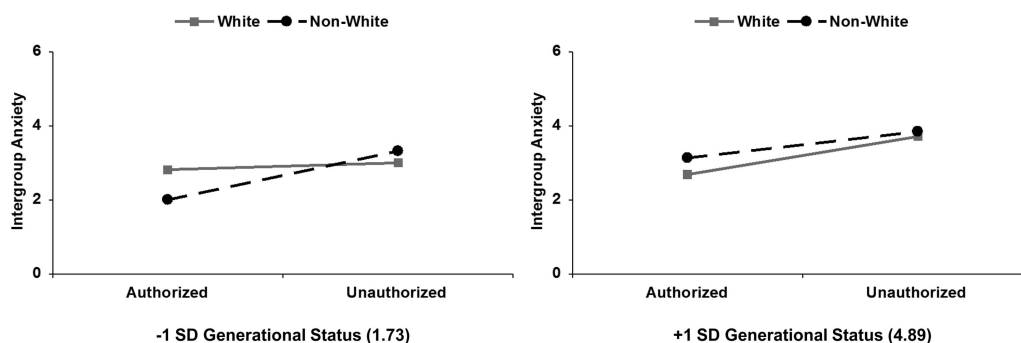


Figure 2. Chart of simple slopes as a function of the interaction of participant race and immigrant group at -1 SD and +1 SD on generational status.

Table 3
Output From Linear Regression Predicting Intergroup Anxiety From Condition, Participant Race, Generational Status, and Their Interactions

Variable	B	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	95% CI	Partial eta squared
Constant	3.06	29.89	< .001	[2.86, 3.26]	.83
Condition	-.40	-3.94	< .001	[-.61, -.20]	.08
Participant race	-.01	-.09	.93	[-.21, .19]	.00
Generational status (centered)	.18	2.70	.008	[.05, .31]	.04
Condition × Participant Race	.11	1.05	.30	[-.10, .31]	.01
Generational Status × Participant Race	-.09	-1.29	.20	[-.22, .05]	.01
Generational Status × Condition	-.02	-.32	.75	[-.15, .11]	.00
Generational Status × Participant Race × Condition	-.12	-1.75	.08	[-.25, .02]	.02

Note. Condition was contrast-coded, -1 = ratings of unauthorized immigrants, and +1 = ratings of authorized immigrants. Participant race was contrast-coded, -1 = non-White, and +1 = White. *B* = unstandardized coefficient; CI = confidence interval.

gration and are among the most directly affected by immigration policy and debates. We did not assess participants' immigration status or exposure/contact with authorized/unauthorized immigrants directly because there are obvious ethical challenges in asking undergraduate participants about their immigration status; therefore, we are unable to test these effects directly. In addition, the region where this study took place has one of the largest refugee resettlement programs in the United States; consequently, the participants in our sample may be more aware of refugee resettlement and the high density of refugee communities living in the surrounding university area. Indeed, this awareness and exposure to refugee-related issues may have altered participant perceptions, depending on the type of contact experienced. Therefore, this research provides important preliminary data with a group directly impacted by immigration and resettlement debates.

Future Directions

The current research suggests the need for greater distinction between varying groups of immigrants in future studies. Individ-

uals do appear to differentiate between types of immigrants (refugees, authorized and unauthorized immigrants) when forming beliefs and attitudes about immigrants. This suggests the importance of moving beyond broad social categories when assessing prejudice, emotions, attitudes, and beliefs. Moreover, there are differences in opinions depending on the generational status of the respondent. In the current research, this proves to be an important moderator, in particular for racial/ethnic minority groups, and should be incorporated into future investigations on the topic. These findings have implications for interventions by targeting groups more distant from the migration experience for prejudice reduction.

Future research should examine whether recent immigrants hold more positive attitudes toward migrant groups globally, as was tested here, or if it is specific to one's own immigrant group. Here, we ask about authorized and unauthorized immigrants in a general sense, but, likely, the racial/ethnic background and country/region of origin of specific immigrant groups may be another within-group category that affects prejudicial attitudes (see Marx, Ko, &

Table 4
Output From Linear Regression Predicting Prejudicial Attitudes From Condition, Participant Race, Generational Status, Perceived Realistic Threat, Perceived Symbolic Threat, and Intergroup Anxiety

Variable	B	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	95% CI	Partial eta squared
Step 1					
Constant	2.97	32.63	< .001	[2.79, 3.15]	.85
Condition	-.47	-5.10	< .001	[-.65, -.29]	.12
Participant race	.00	.04	.97	[-.21, .22]	.00
Generational Status (centered)	.19	2.73	.007	[.05, .33]	.04
Step 2					
Constant	2.97	43.72	< .001	[2.83, 3.10]	.91
Condition	-.04	-.45	.65	[-.21, .13]	.00
Participant race	.02	.19	.85	[-.15, .18]	.00
Generational status (centered)	.02	.37	.71	[-.09, .13]	.00
Perceived realistic threat (centered)	.26	4.58	< .001	[.15, .37]	.10
Perceived symbolic threat (centered)	.30	3.90	< .001	[.15, .45]	.08
Intergroup anxiety (centered)	.33	5.00	< .001	[.20, .46]	.12

Note. Condition was contrast-coded, -1 = ratings of unauthorized immigrants, and +1 = ratings of authorized immigrants; participant race was contrast-coded, -1 = non-White, and +1 = White. *B* = unstandardized coefficient; CI = confidence interval.

Murray, 2012). Previous research has documented that individuals identify Whites as more “American” than other racial/ethnic groups (Devos & Banaji, 2005); thus, future research may benefit from differentiating immigrants from particular racial/ethnic groups or that are more or less prototypical (Kessler et al., 2010) or “American” (Devos & Banaji, 2005).

Finally, this research has implications for intervention efforts aimed at reducing prejudice by providing exposure and education about unauthorized immigrants specifically. Efforts that aim to reduce misinformation regarding threats, negative stereotypes, and intergroup anxiety may, in turn, reduce prejudicial attitudes and intergroup hostilities. As the United States and the world continue to struggle with rapidly rising rates of immigrants and immigration, the advancement of research, programs, and policies to adaptively address the sequelae of immigration are needed.

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