



# Prejudice towards Immigrants: Competences Elicit Stronger and more Favorable Sentiments

## Prejuicio hacia Inmigrantes: Las Competencias Elicitan Sentimientos más Fuertes y Favorables

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### Abstract

We examined prejudice and discrimination toward immigrants, specifically Mexican immigrants, as a function of their perceived competence and warmth, and the perceiver's agreeableness, attitudes and acculturation level. We found that an immigrant's competence evoked stronger feelings and responses than their warmth. Moreover, pre-existing attitudes strongly predicted prejudices toward immigrants. Of the Big Five variables, only Agreeableness predicted positive sentiments and actions toward immigrants. Finally, acculturation within Latinos correlated negatively with positive feelings and actions toward immigrants. More acculturated Latinos were less welcoming of immigrants. The results are partially explained by the Stereotypic Content Model.

**Keywords:** Prejudice, Immigrants, Discrimination, Big Five

### Resumen

Se examinaron la discriminación y el prejuicio hacia los inmigrantes, específicamente hacia inmigrantes mexicanos, en función de su competencia percibida y afecto, y la agradabilidad, actitudes y nivel de aculturación del perceptor. Se encontró que la competencia del inmigrante evoca sentimientos y respuestas más fuertes que el afecto. Aún más, actitudes pre-existentes predicen fuertemente los prejuicios hacia inmigrantes. De las variables de los Cinco Grandes, sólo la agradabilidad predijo sentimientos y conductas positivos hacia los inmigrantes. Finalmente, la aculturación en los latinos correlacionó de manera negativa con sentimientos positivos y conductas hacia los inmigrantes. Los latinos más aculturados son menos abiertos con los inmigrantes. Los resultados son parcialmente explicados por el Modelo de Contenido Estereotípico.

**Palabras Clave:** Prejuicio, Inmigrantes, Discriminación, Cinco Grandes

In recent years, wars, political unrest, ethnic or religious conflicts and economic instability have displaced millions of people worldwide. These immigrants hold varied skills that may benefit the host countries, but

the resettlement of these masses has given rise to anti-immigrant sentiments and stereotypes in the U.S. and abroad with governments taking or threatening to take harsher actions to limit immigration (Quintero,

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2017; Sunstein, 2016). Fears of immigrants lacking abilities, taking jobs away from citizens or corrupting American values persist and are as present today as they were in the nation's founding (Merelli, 2017; Shear & Benner, 2018). However, contrasting views supporting the benefits of immigration are also present. Evidence shows that immigration vitalizes the host country. For example, immigrants have higher rates of entrepreneurialism and acquisition of skills than natives of a host country (Lofstrom, 2014; Reeves, 2016). Moreover, immigrant children demonstrate extraordinarily strong upward educational and income mobility of any group of children (Betts & Lofstrom, 2000; Reeves, 2016).

People immigrate to the United States for different reasons, to attend school, for leisure, to reunite with family members, for political reasons, to escape religious or ethnic persecution and seek asylum or in search of better jobs to support their family (Navarro, 2009). Regardless of the reasons, immigrants bring with them varied skills which reflect the range of the educational opportunities and training that they received in their home countries (Moore, 2017). Many were farmers, electricians, carpenters, paramedics, dentists, physicians, therapists or pharmacists in their respective countries (Moore, 2017).

We examined the range of attitudes and sentiments toward immigrants, and we asked if the prejudices and discrimination varied as a function of their skills and competences. Though stereotypes of immigrants persist and are generalized (Caprariello, Cuddy, & Fiske, 2009), we posited that sentiments toward immigrants vary, and that how welcoming hosts are of immigrants depends on the perceived competences and warmth of the immigrants. We further asked if personality and acculturation levels of their hosts mitigated these prejudices and discrimination.

The Stereotypic Content Model (SCM) has been widely used to explain why people hold stereotypes about others, and more importantly, are prejudiced and discriminate against others (Lee & Fiske, 2006). According to this model, how we feel and act toward others are based on two criteria: our perceptions of others' competence and warmth (Lee & Fiske, 2006). Competence may be assessed based on an individual's

acquired skills, performance level, job status and income, with higher competence attributed to those with better skills and performance, and higher income levels and job status. A person's warmth is based on similarity and cooperation, with higher warmth attributed to those with shared common attitudes and who contribute to group goals. The two dimensions are assessed in combination. For example, the homeless, who are perceived low on both warmth and competence, are likely to elicit contempt and disgust and be demeaned (Lee & Fiske, 2006). The elderly, perceived to be high in warmth and low in competence, elicit feelings of warmth and pity and are likely to be helped. College students, perceived as both high in warmth and competence, evoke feelings of admiration and are welcomed.

The model is useful in assessing prejudices toward immigrants. For example, immigrants who are perceived as competing for American jobs as compared to those who do not, elicit lower warmth attributions and greater discrimination (Caprariello, Cuddy, & Fiske, 2009). Levine & Campbell (1972) labelled such a competition for perceived limited resources Realistic Conflict theory. By contrast, one would expect that low-skilled immigrants would be perceived as less threatening because they are not competing for jobs (Fiske, 2012). However, evidence suggests that the American public views low status migrants with much more contempt and disgust, seeking to exclude them from the country (Caprariello et al., 2009). In a society that places greater value on merit than on need or equality (Berman, Murphy-Berman & Singh, 1985), low competence may outweigh attributions of warmth or sympathies for those in need.

There is also evidence that fear and anxiety of an out-group, with different cultural practices and a language, may exacerbate negative attitudes toward them (Plant, Butz, & Tartakovsky, 2008). Times of economic decline may heighten prejudices and evoke feelings of relative deprivation in the hosts (Smith & Pettigrew, 2015). Nevertheless, prejudice may be mitigated if immigrants are perceived assimilating to the host culture. When an out group adapts and cooperates with the in group, their intent is seen as friendly and trustworthy (Fiske, Cuddy, & Glick, 2006). Indeed, prejudices may be mitigated by a forged commonness in group

identity (Gaertner & Dovidio, 2012). By contrast, an uncooperative out group is ascribed negative traits and is more likely to be discriminated against (Fiske, Cuddy, & Glick, 2006; Riek, Mania, & Gaertner, 2006).

The model may prove useful in testing prejudices and discrimination that favor or disfavor an immigrant based on their perceived competence levels and warmth (Cuddy, Glick, & Fiske, 2007), but personality factors, attitudes and acculturation levels may also provide a better understanding of prejudices toward immigrants. Ekehammar and Akrami, (2003) proposed that attitudes toward various out groups stem from one or more personality basic traits. Their findings show that Openness to Experience and Agreeableness were highly significant and negatively correlated with generalized prejudice. Moreover, Hodson, Hogg, and MacInnis (2009) found that Openness to experience negatively predicted prejudice even when statistically controlling for other Big Five factors. In this study, the Right Wing Authoritarianism scale (RWA) and the Social Dominance Orientation (SDO) were negatively correlated with Openness whereas SDO was negatively correlated with Agreeableness (Hodson, Hogg, & MacInnis, 2009). These findings suggest that people who score high on openness to experience and agreeableness may be more welcoming and accepting of immigrants compared to those who score low on both personality traits.

Attitudes are the most direct way of measuring prejudice toward others, and indeed sentiments toward immigrants have been openly expressed in opinion polls, public debates and policy forums, and range from outright hostility and fear to sympathy and support (Navarro, 2009; Suarez-Orozco, C. & Suarez Orozco, M., 2002). Immigrants have been depicted as incompatible with American culture, cunning opportunists who manipulate the system, and culturally inferior and prone to crime. Positive attributes describe immigrants as hardworking and dedicated, loyal and willing to make familial sacrifices, and ambitious and entrepreneurial (Suarez-Orozco, C. & Suarez Orozco, M., 2002).

Pre-existing stereotypes and prejudices based on others' race, gender, nationality, religion, profession, socioeconomic status, and similar social categories

may be an important source of error in our judgments of others (Cuddy, Glick, & Beninger, 2011), and thus, important to take into account. For example, Plant et al. (2008) found that participants with more reported anger and anxiety toward out groups avoided interethnic interactions and blamed the out group if the interactions were negative. Specifically, anger in White participants was linked with avoidance of Hispanics, while anxiety in Hispanics was associated with avoidance of Whites (Plant et al., 2008). By contrast, if Hispanics and Whites had more positive expectations about interacting with each other, behavioral avoidance of the out group was lower. (Plant et al., 2008). Thus, individuals may respond with greater affect and make more extreme decisions about who to trust, doubt, defend, avoid or associate with based on existing stereotypes and prejudices (Cuddy, Glick, & Beninger, 2011). Thus, pre-existing attitudes toward others may influence how we feel and behave toward them.

Another study by Binder, Polinard, and Wrinkle (1997) measured Mexican-American and Anglo attitudes toward immigration reform. The study, conducted in the Rio Grande Valley, and bordering Mexico, involved a large Latino population. This study found that Latino attitudes toward immigration policies can be characterized as presenting "two competing views, which involves the cultural perspective and the socio-economic status (SES) perspective". The former suggests that Latinos, because of their cultural affinity with nations south of the U.S. border, are more likely than Anglos to oppose restrictions imposed by immigration policies. The latter, on the other hand, suggests that differences between Latino and Anglo immigration attitudes are less a function of national origin than how integrated Latinos are into American society. Thus, the more integrated the Latino populations are into American society, the more the Latino attitudes will resemble Anglo attitudes toward immigration (Binder, Polinard, & Wrinkle, 1997). By contrast, the more Mexican a respondent identified him or herself to be, the less restrictive was their stance toward immigration policies. These findings suggest that the more acculturated a Hispanic is, the less welcoming they will be towards an immigrant.

Our key research question then asked whether individuals' sentiments and behaviors toward an immigrant would vary as a function of their perceived competence and warmth. We reasoned that prejudices and discrimination would vary, and that individuals would be more welcoming of immigrants who were perceived as warm and competent. Thus, for the first hypothesis we predict that more positive feelings and actions will be expressed toward immigrants who are perceived to be warmer and more competent.

Auxiliary research questions about how prejudice is expressed toward immigrants also concerned personal factors and pre-existing prejudices. Specifically, we reasoned that individuals who were higher in Openness to experience and Agreeableness would be more welcoming of immigrants. Thus, for our second hypothesis, we predict that more positive feelings and actions will be expressed toward immigrants by those who were more open to experience and agreeable. Moreover, attitudes and behaviors had to be assessed controlling for pre-existing prejudices. For our third hypothesis we expected that individuals with more positive attitudes toward immigrants would be more welcoming of immigrants.

We also reasoned that those who were less acculturated would be more welcoming of immigrants. Thus, we predicted for our fourth hypothesis that within the Hispanic sample, the less acculturated Hispanics will express more positive feelings and behaviors toward immigrants.

## Method

### *Participants, Design and Procedure*

The participants in the study were undergraduate students who were recruited from a central Texas university. Participants were randomly assigned to one of four vignettes in a 2 x 2 between-subjects factorial design. The vignette was created about a Mexican immigrant because Mexican immigrants make up the majority of the immigrant population in the United States, constituting more than 11.7 million immigrants by 2014 (Zong & Batalova, 2016). The vignette below describes one of four conditions. In this particular vignette an immigrant is highly competent

and skilled and warm, who will not be competing with Americans for jobs or resources.

An immigrant from Mexico, with name initials C.G., arrives in the United States. C.G. can speak, read, and write in English and Spanish, is highly skilled and has a master's degree from a well-respected university. C.G. will not likely compete for the same job positions that Americans will be applying for, but because C.G. is self-sufficient and self-reliable, will not take advantage of social services and resources available to Americans.

The other three conditions varied the descriptions. A low competent immigrant was described as someone without degrees and who could only speak Spanish. An immigrant in a low warmth condition was described as someone who would be competing with Americans for jobs and taking advantage of resources.

*Dependent Variables.* Immediately following the manipulation, participants answered 4 questions about how they felt towards the immigrant and 4 questions about how they would behave towards the immigrant in the story. Specifically, four questions asked the extent to which they would admire, envy, feel disgust towards, and sympathize with the immigrant. Four questions asked the extent to which they would exclude, help, associate with, and fight with the immigrant. The responses were noted on a 7 point Likert scale from Very Unlikely to Very Likely.

*Manipulation Checks.* Two items asked participants about how warm the immigrant was. And, two questions asked participants about how competent the immigrant was. These items were rated on a 5 point Likert scale from Extremely to Not at all.

### *Additional Measures*

*Big Five.* The brief and revised 10 item measure of the Big Five adapted from the original scale (Costa and McCrae, 1992) was used (Gosling, Rentfrow and Swann, 2003). Participants rated the extent to which they agreed or disagreed with a descriptor, Likert scaled on 7 points ranging from disagree strongly to strongly agree. Openness to experience and agreeableness were measured with two items each. Examples of items measuring Openness to Experience were:

“Complex” and “Conventional.” Examples of items measuring Agreeableness were “Sympathize” and “Quarrelsome.” Test-retest reliability for agreeableness and open to experience were  $r = .58$  and  $r = .48$ , respectively. Inter item reliability was not reported.

*Attitudes toward Immigrants.* Ashby Plant, David Butz, and Margarta Tartakovsky (2008) developed a scale to measure attitudes toward Hispanics. Inter item reliability tests of these developed scales are quite robust with alpha of .94 for White participants and .90 for Hispanic participants. Nine questions were adapted from this questionnaire to measure Attitudes toward Immigrants. An example of a question is: “Many Americans are unable to get jobs because so many Hispanic immigrants are taking them.” Participants rated the extent to which they agreed with each statement on a 7 point Likert scale ranging from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (7).

*Acculturation Scale.* Participants who identified themselves as Hispanic/Latina (o) on the survey, were administered a 13 item acculturation scale (Marin, Sabogal, Marin, Otero-Sabogal, and Perez-Stable, 1987) that asked participants about their preferred usage of language and racial/ethnic group. The Likert scaled items on 5 points from Only Spanish to Only English measured language use and media preference items. Ethnic social relations preferences ranged from Only Latinos/Hispanics to Only Americans. This scale’s inter item reliability that combined the language use with social relations preferences subscales has been shown to be quite robust with the reliability alpha coefficient at .92 (Marin, et al., 1987).

## Results

### Participants

There were originally 507 college students in this study. Seventy-eight participants were eliminated for not completing the survey or having missing data. The data for 429 participants was left to analyze in this study. Of the 86 male participants, 2.3 % identified as Asian, 8.1 % as African American/Black, 33.7 % as Hispanic/Latino, 46.5 % as White, 8.1 % as Mixed, and 1.2% as Other. Of the 343 female participants, 3.5 % identified as Asian, 14 % as African-American/

Black, 30.6 % as Hispanic/Latina, 42.6 % as White, 9 % as Mixed, and 3 % as Other.

### Preliminary Analysis

The two items measuring Openness ( $r = .104, p < .05$ ) and the two items measuring Agreeableness ( $r = .208, p < .001$ ) were not correlated with each other. Thus, the two Openness and two Agreeableness items were analyzed separately. The reliability for the 9 item Attitudes toward Immigrants scale was quite robust ( $\alpha = .93$ ). The reliability of the 13 item Acculturation scale was also acceptable ( $\alpha = .89$ ).

Independent sample t-tests conducted to check whether the manipulations worked indicated that only the two competence items, were both statistically significant,  $t(426) = 3.893, p < .001$ , and  $t(425) = 9.010, p < .001$ . The manipulation checks for the two warmth items were not statistically significant.

### Tests of Hypotheses

The first three hypotheses were tested using a MANOVA that allowed 2 dichotomous and their interaction and 5 continuous independent variables to be regressed on 4 emotional (disgust, sympathize, admire, envy) and 4 behavioral (help, fight, associate, exclude) variables. The analysis met assumptions of normality, equality of covariance and absence of multicollinearity. In addition, scatterplot matrices show linearity among the dependent variables. The multivariate tests of this model using Wilks’ Lambda criteria showed that both Warmth ( $F(8, 398) = 2.21, p < .05$ ) and Competence ( $F(8, 398) = 15.51, p < .001$ ), but not their interaction, were significant (Table 1). Additionally, two Agreeableness items were significant, ( $F(8, 398) = 3.70, p < .001$ ) and ( $F(8, 398) = 1.98, p < .05$ ) including the Positive Attitudes toward Immigrants ( $F(8, 398) = 26.19, p < .001$ ). The two Openness items were not significant.

Tests of Between-Subjects Effects were conducted only if the Multivariate tests using the Wilks’ Lambda criteria showed significance. The Warmth manipulation elicited main differences between Low and High Warmth conditions in two emotions: Disgust ( $F(1, 405) = 125.93, p < .05$ ) and Admiration ( $F(1, 405) = 75.69, p < .05$ ). Disgust was far more likely

to be elicited in the Low warmth and Admiration in the High warmth conditions. See Table 2 for mean differences between conditions for Warmth.

The Competence manipulation elicited significant condition differences for Disgust ( $F(1, 13.57) = 7.68$ ,

$p < .05$ ), Admiration ( $F(1, 129.60) = 68.60, p < .001$ ), Envy ( $F(1, 107.78) = 55.53, p < .001$ ), Helping ( $F(1, 6.02) = 4.36, p < .05$ ), Associate ( $F(1, 55.08) = 33.65, p < .001$ ) and Exclude ( $F(1, 17.99) = 12.84, p < .001$ ). Table 3 shows mean differences between conditions

**Table 1**  
MANOVA

| IV          | DV      | MANOVA          |          | ANOVA  |          |         |          |    |          |
|-------------|---------|-----------------|----------|--------|----------|---------|----------|----|----------|
|             |         | Wilk's <i>k</i> | <i>F</i> | df     | <i>p</i> | MS      | <i>F</i> | df | <i>p</i> |
| Sym.Agr.    |         | .931            | 3.696    | 398.00 | .000     |         |          |    |          |
|             | Admire  |                 |          |        |          | 15.233  | 8.063    | 1  | .005     |
|             | Sympa.  |                 |          |        |          | 26.782  | 17.686   | 1  | .000     |
|             | Help    |                 |          |        |          | 26.949  | 19.507   | 1  | .000     |
|             | Exclude |                 |          |        |          | 7.809   | 5.570    | 1  | .019     |
| Crit. Agree |         | .962            | 1.977    | 398.00 | .048     |         |          |    |          |
| Pos.Att.    |         | .655            | 26.190   | 398.00 | .000     |         |          |    |          |
|             | Disgust |                 |          |        |          | 222.456 | 125.933  | 1  | .000     |
|             | Admire  |                 |          |        |          | 143.004 | 75.689   | 1  | .000     |
|             | Sympa.  |                 |          |        |          | 120.360 | 79.483   | 1  | .000     |
|             | Help    |                 |          |        |          | 122.436 | 88.627   | 1  | .000     |
|             | Fight   |                 |          |        |          | 25.759  | 18.151   | 1  | .000     |
|             | Assoc.  |                 |          |        |          | 178.146 | 108.812  | 1  | .000     |
|             | Exclude |                 |          |        |          | 92.637  | 66.082   | 1  | .000     |
| Warm        |         | .957            | 2.212    | 398.00 | .026     |         |          |    |          |
|             | Disgust |                 |          |        |          | 16.851  | 9.539    | 1  | .002     |
|             | Admire  |                 |          |        |          | 15.401  | 8.151    | 1  | .005     |
| Compete.    |         | .762            | 15.514   | 398.00 | .000     |         |          |    |          |
|             | Disgust |                 |          |        |          | 13.569  | 7.681    | 1  | .006     |
|             | Admire  |                 |          |        |          | 129.604 | 68.596   | 1  | .000     |
|             | Envy    |                 |          |        |          | 107.783 | 55.533   | 1  | .000     |
|             | Help    |                 |          |        |          | 6.020   | 4.358    | 1  | .037     |
|             | Assoc.  |                 |          |        |          | 55.083  | 33.645   | 1  | .000     |
|             | Exclude |                 |          |        |          | 17.992  | 12.835   | 1  | .000     |

**Table 2**  
Mean Differences between conditions for Warmth

|         | Warm | N   | Mean | Std. Deviation | 95% Confidence Interval<br>Lower - Upper |
|---------|------|-----|------|----------------|--|
| Disgust | Low  | 219 | 2.54 | 1.68           | 2.38 2.70                                |
|         | High | 211 | 2.15 | 1.43           | 2.01 2.28                                |
| Admire  | Low  | 220 | 4.48 | 1.76           | 4.31 4.64                                |
|         | High | 210 | 4.88 | 1.49           | 4.73 5.02                                |

for Competence. There is less Disgust, greater Admiration and Envy for immigrants in the High Competence condition than those in the Low competence condition. Additionally, immigrants with higher competence were more likely to be Helped, associated with and less likely to be Excluded than immigrants in the low competence condition.

Only one Agreeableness item significantly predicted two emotions and two behaviors. Specifically, Agreeableness predicted Admiration ( $F(1, 405) = 8.06, p < .05$ ), Sympathize ( $F(1, 405) = 17.69, p < .001$ ), Help ( $F(1, 405) = 19.51, p < .001$ ) and Exclude ( $F(1, 405) = 5.57, p < .05$ ). Correlation analyses examining

the relationships between this predictor and these four criteria, shown in Table 4, indicate that the more Agreeableness of the participant, the more likely they were to admire, sympathize, help and include the immigrant.

Attitudes toward Immigrants significantly predicted three emotions and four behaviors. Specifically, Attitudes predicted Disgust ( $F(1, 405) = 125.93, p < .001$ ), Admiration ( $F(1, 405) = p < .001$ ), Sympathize ( $F(1, 405) = 79.48, p < .001$ ), Help ( $F(1, 405) = 88.63, p < .001$ ), Fight ( $F(1, 405) = 18.51, p < .001$ ), Associate ( $F(1, 405) = 108.81, p < .001$ ) and Exclude ( $F(1, 405) = 66.08, p < .001$ ). Table 4 shows that

**Table 3**  
Mean Differences between conditions for Competence

|           | <b>Competent</b> | <b>N</b> | <b>Mean</b> | <b>Std. Deviation</b> | <b>95% Confidence Interval<br/>Lower - Upper</b> |
|-----------|------------------|----------|-------------|-----------------------|--|
| Disgust   | Low              | 202      | 2.59        | 1.56                  | 2.44 2.73  |
|           | High             | 228      | 2.13        | 1.56                  | 1.98 2.27  |
| Admire    | Low              | 202      | 4.03        | 1.53                  | 3.88 4.17  |
|           | High             | 228      | 5.24        | 1.53                  | 5.09 5.38  |
| Envy      | Low              | 202      | 2.15        | 1.21                  | 2.03 2.26  |
|           | High             | 228      | 3.14        | 1.53                  | 2.99 3.28  |
| Help      | Low              | 202      | 4.91        | 1.40                  | 4.77 5.04  |
|           | High             | 229      | 5.28        | 1.32                  | 5.15 5.40  |
| Associate | Low              | 202      | 4.33        | 1.55                  | 4.18 4.47  |
|           | High             | 229      | 5.18        | 1.41                  | 5.04 5.31  |
| Exclude   | Low              | 202      | 2.55        | 1.38                  | 2.41 2.68  |
|           | High             | 229      | 2.05        | 1.21                  | 1.93 2.16  |

**Table 4**  
Correlation Matrix of Key Variables

| <b>DV</b>  | <b>Warm</b> | <b>Competent</b> | <b>Agree</b> | <b>Pos.Att.</b> |
|------------|-------------|------------------|--------------|-----------------|
| Disgust    | -.124**     | -.148**          |              | -.518**         |
| Admire     | .121*       | .367**           | .207**       | .410**          |
| Sympathize |             |                  | .263**       | .433**          |
| Envy       |             | .336**           |              |                 |
| Help       |             | .134**           | .290**       | .456**          |
| Fight      |             |                  |              | -.251**         |
| Associate  |             | .277**           |              | .490**          |
| Exclude    |             | -.187**          | -.194**      | .407**          |

Note: N = 423 – 428. \* p < .05, \*\* p < .01

individuals with the more positive attitudes toward immigrants were more likely to admire, sympathize, help, and associate with the immigrant. Also, these individuals were less likely to feel disgust, fight, and exclude the immigrant in the vignette.

A correlation analysis was used to test the fourth hypothesis. The analysis showed that Acculturation was correlated negatively with Admire ( $r (129) = -.260, p < .001$ ), Help ( $r (129) = -.314, p < .001$ ), and Associate ( $r (129) = -.306, p < .001$ ). Thus, the more acculturated the participant, the less likely they were to admire, help and associate with the immigrant in the vignette.

## Discussion

We examined prejudices and discrimination against immigrants as predicted by their perceived competence and warmth, and the Openness of experience and Agreeableness, pre-existing attitudes and the acculturation levels of the participants. Hypotheses 1 and 2 were partially supported. Hypotheses 3 and Hypothesis 4 were more strongly supported.

The Competence condition evoked far more emotional and behavioral outcomes than the Warmth condition. High competent immigrants were more likely to be admired and envied and more likely to be included, associated with and helped. This finding suggests that our high regard for highly skilled and competent immigrants mitigates prejudices and discrimination against them. This finding also reflects the tendency to weigh stable factors such as Competence more highly than Warmth (Fiske, Cuddy, Glick, & Xu, 2002). For example, while ability is perceived as a fixed construct, warmth, by contrast may vary and be unreliable. A person may cooperate today but compete tomorrow, but their ability or competence is perceived as unchanging. Thus, an immigrant's Competence, or the lack of, may evoke more emotions and behaviors than an immigrant's Warmth.

The strength of the competence condition may also reflect the valued stereotypes Americans see themselves as possessing and expect others to have, such as hard working, skilled and prosperous (Weber, 1904/1992, p175). Immigrants with high competence

may be perceived as assimilating to these values and as a better fit with the host country. In sum, highly skilled immigrant may be more likely to be welcomed and accepted because they are perceived to be more as an in-group than an outgroup (Gaertner & Dovidio, 2012; Linville & Jones, 1980).

Additionally, only one Agreeableness item, but not Openness to experience was linked with two emotions and two behaviors. Our results partially support previous findings linking Agreeableness with greater acceptance of out-groups (Hodson, Hogg, & MacInnis, 2009). We suspect that the Openness to experience items, may have been misunderstood. Participants' feedback of the descriptor Conventional indicated that they did not understand the term. Additionally, the term Complex was also ambiguous to many participants and was interpreted by many to mean problematic rather than someone who is open to experience.

Attitudes toward immigrants showed the strongest and most consistent correlations with all but one criterion variable. This suggests that the Likert measure of attitudes is a robust and reliable predictor of how individuals will feel and intend to behave toward immigrants. The Acculturation results within the Latino sample were as predicted and support prior findings (Binder, Polinard, & Wrinkle, 1997). More acculturated Latinos have adopted more mainstream attitudes toward immigrants.

## Limitations and Future Directions

There are limitations in the current study. First, the vignettes presented were hypothetical. Participants may not respond or express themselves so openly in person as they would toward a character in a story. For example, an individual may control or keep their prejudices in check in a real interaction. A future study may assess reactions based on face to face interactions with immigrants. Second, the vignette in the story was about a Mexican immigrant. Participants may have prejudices that extend beyond or toward a different ethnic group. For example, different prejudices may have been elicited toward an immigrant from Western Europe. A future study would examine

prejudices toward immigrants from different countries or cultures. Third, our Warm condition was weak. The manipulation check indicated that it did not have the intended effect. Perhaps a vignette about an immigrant who cooperated or sacrificed for the host country would increase the strength of this condition. Fourth, our participants were college students, and their sentiments toward immigrants may not be the same as those who are not college students. Thus, even though our participant sample was diverse, the generalizability of the findings may be limited to attitudes held by college students.

## Conclusion

This Stereotypic Content Model along with additional measures were tested to determine how people would feel and behave toward immigrants who varied in their competence and warmth. These measures not been previously been tested together in previous research. Our findings suggest that immigrants are not all treated the same, and that a better understanding of how immigrants are treated are obtained by examining the issue in a multifactorial way. Immigrants are welcomed differently depending on their competence, to some extent warmth, and by the agreeableness, attitudes and acculturation level of the perceiver. This serves to inform policymakers of the varied prejudices held of immigrants and the types of discrimination they are likely to face in order to implement humane policy options.

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