

LATINX AND WHITE AMERICANS ON THEIR AMERICAN IDENTITY: THE
EFFECT OF PERCEPTION OF CULTURE ON IDENTITY.

by

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DEDICATION

To my grandparents and my parents, who traveled many kilometers to give me the opportunity of a better life. Gracias por todo, los amo.

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of the current study is to compare levels of American identity between White and Latinx Americans. This study uses the Zárate et al. (2012) cultural inertia manipulation to create three different conditions in which the perception of culture may affect the affiliation to American identity in both samples. Participants (N=209) were randomly assigned to three conditions: a static condition that suggests there is little to no change in the culture, a dynamic condition that suggests there is a tremendous change in the culture, and a control condition in which there is no suggestion with respect of cultural change. Paired comparisons of the data showed that Latinx participants reported marginally higher American identification than White participants in the static condition. Results also pointed out that for the Latinx sample greater perceptions of threat of Latinxs predicted greater American identity in the dynamic and control conditions. Meanwhile, for White participants, greater perceived threat predicted greater American identity in the static and control conditions.

I. LATINX AND WHITE AMERICANS ON THEIR AMERICAN IDENTITY: THE EFFECT OF PERCEPTION OF CULTURE ON IDENTITY.

Who should we welcome into the United States? Even though this is not a new question, in recent years it has become more common to hear it in the media. One can just watch a political debate to find how people from all sides of the political spectrum are talking about immigrants and about what factors decide which immigrants should be welcomed. The recent debates around immigrants have mostly revolved around Latinxs because, as of 2017, 44% of immigrants reported having Hispanic or Latino origins. This sums up to be 19.7 million people, which makes them the biggest ethnic migrant group residing in the U.S. (Batalova et al., 2018). Furthermore, Latinxs make up the biggest ethnic minority group in the U.S., as of 2015 there were 56.5 million Latinxs (Pew Research Center, 2015). Hence, Latinxs are the preferred hot topic in the media and by political figures.

The spotlight may have brought some consequences to the population. For example, 38% of all Latinxs in the U.S. say that they have experienced some form of discrimination against them during the past 12 months (López, Gonzalez-Barrera, & Krogstad, 2018). The number is 41% for foreign-born Latinos and 47% for second-generation Latinxs (López, Gonzalez-Barrera, & Krogstad, 2018). This increased sense of perceived discrimination can have long-run repercussion on the population, as it has been linked to more depressive symptoms; heightened psychological distress; greater engagement in risky sexual behaviors, substance use, deviancy; and lower academic or job performance and satisfaction (Benner et al., 2018; Lee, & Ahn, 2012; Pascoe, &

Smart Richman, 2009). Thus, the results of this very polarized public debate, which is swayed by politicians and their massive media platforms, can negatively impact the lives of thousands.

When deciding who we should welcome in the U.S., it has become a standard for politicians and the media to measure Latinxs' backgrounds against the so called "American principles" to decide who is worthy. Therefore, the question has shifted and become: who is American enough to be in the United States? Usually they answer this question by comparing Latinxs against Whites. This is because that there is an implicit association that being White equals being an American, as it was shown by Devos and Banaji (2005). However, there is a need to measure how accurate this assumption can be.

American identity has been established as a collective identity, in which individuals associate and attach to a social group (Ashmore, Deaux, & McLaughlin-Volpe, 2004; Spinner-Halev & Theiss-Morse, 2003; Theiss-Morse, 2009). Hence, American identity can be found in the same theoretical model of social attachment and self-esteem of any other ethnic cultural identity, which means that it can be measured through psychometric scales. Measuring an American national identity has been a popular subject of study in the field of social and cultural psychology, especially after the events of 9/11 (Schwartz et al., 2012). There has been an interest on developing a scale that can accurately measure the affiliation of an individual's cultural context in the United States (Huddy, & Khatib, 2007; Schwartz et al., 2012; Wright, Citrin, & Wand, 2012; Rodriguez, Schwartz, & Krauss Whitbourne, 2010). More importantly, most of the research that has used these measures focus on how strongly immigrants identify with the majoritarian national identity, or the contrasts between immigrant's affiliation to their

new culture and their native one (Nguyen, & Benet-Martínez, 2013; Smith, & Silva, 2011). However, there is a lack of research on the levels of American identity of monocultural White Americans.

Just like any other cultural identity, American identity can change due to interactions with other cultures; a change in the historical context; and advancements in medicine, education, and technology (Zárate et al., 2012). As of today, cultural change is an inevitable reality and for immigrants it becomes a normal path of their journey. Eibach and Keegan (2006) showed that cultural change is often perceived by White Americans as losing part of their cultural identity. This is because cultural change can be seen as a threat for the majority group that wishes to maintain their identity stable (Zárate & Shaw, 2010). However, this sense of threat to traditional values is contrasted by multicultural views, which under mutual acceptance and appreciation many people come to believe that immigrants strengthen the American ways of life (Berry, 1984; Zárate & Shaw, 2010). These different reactions to cultural change can be explained with the model of cultural inertia, in which the desire of avoiding or wanting cultural changes can be explained by the perceived movement of the dominant culture (Zárate & Shaw, 2010; Zárate et al., 2012; Quezada, Shaw, & Zárate, 2012). Zárate et al. (2012) introduced the model of cultural inertia to explain that inter-group prejudice and engagement with the culture can be influenced by manipulating the perception of cultural change. The model is based on research that showed that participants were more positive towards cultural change when they perceived their culture as already in movement (Zárate et al., 2012). Under this model, the larger and more stable groups resist change and the smaller groups are the ones proposing change (Zárate et al., 2012). In the context of the United States,

White Americans represent the majoritarian culture as they are the most readily associated with it (Devos & Banaji, 2005). Thus, under the model of cultural inertia, Whites would resist change, while ethnic minorities, such as Latinxs, would perceive change as positive.

Additionally, the strength of identification with the cultural identity of a group can be moderated by the interactions of the groups (Voci, 2006; Stephan, Ybarra, & Bachman, 1999). More specifically, in-group identification becomes stronger when threats, such as immigration, are perceived (Stephan et al., 1999). Following these findings, a dynamic, changing culture may be perceived as threatening to those needing to accommodate to this change, i.e., Whites, (Eibach & Keegan, 2006; Voci, 2006; Zárate & Shaw, 2010). Conversely, this same cultural change may be welcomed by those who are enacting the change, i.e., Latinxs (Zárate et al., 2012). Perceptions of cultural change may therefore strengthen American identity among White Americans.

For ethnic minorities, perceptions of cultural change can affect how the majority culture expects them to integrate to the majoritarian culture (Zárate et al., 2010). Based on assimilation, as groups are introduced to the majoritarian culture, they are expected to take on characteristics of the majority culture and give up aspects of their home culture (Berry, 1984). This concept of assimilation is mostly seen in static perceptions of cultural change, where the majoritarian culture does not have to accommodate to any incoming cultures (Zárate et al., 2010). This may discourage ethnic minorities to integrate or identify more with a majoritarian culture, as they do not wish to lose their ethnic identity (Sellers et al., 2006; Quintana, Herrera, & Nelson, 2010). However, a dynamic culture allows for the concept of multiculturalism, in which groups do not need to lose their

original identity and the majoritarian culture will accommodate for it (Zárate et al., 2010). Thus, perceiving a culture as dynamic could boost the minority group's commitment and affiliation to the majoritarian culture (Zárate et al., 2010). Perceptions of cultural change may therefore strengthen American identity among Latinxs.

Zárate, Shaw, Marquez, and Biagas (2012) presented a way to manipulate how participants perceive culture by manipulating the end points in questionnaires to suggest various degrees of cultural change, from no change to tremendous change. Therefore, it is possible to manipulate how the state of cultural inertia is perceived to measure its effects on American identity. Furthermore, it is possible to compare these levels of identification between a Latinx sample and a White American sample. Thus, we could start answering who is "American enough" with empirical data.

Present Study

The purpose of the present study is attempting to close the gap in research by testing how cultural change affects American identity among monocultural White Americans and Latinx Americans. This study proposes to use the Zárate et al. (2012) manipulation to create three different conditions to measure how the perception of culture may impact affiliation to American identity, perception of realistic and symbolic threats, and levels of prejudice toward Latino immigrants, in both samples. The three conditions would be a static condition that suggest there is little to no change in the culture, a dynamic condition that suggest there is tremendous change in the culture, and a control condition in which the end points are not manipulated to suggest anything with respect of cultural inertia.

Testable Hypotheses

Based on the previous research, we predicted that White participants would express greater perceptions of threat in the dynamic condition than in the static or control condition. Additionally, we predicted that White participants would express greater prejudice toward Latinx immigrants in the dynamic condition than in the static or control conditions.

Furthermore, we predicted that White and Latinx participants would demonstrate higher levels of American and national identity in the dynamic condition compared to the static or control condition. Moreover, we expected that Latinx participants would score higher on American and national identity than Whites in the dynamic condition due to their predisposition to change.

Finally, we predicted that greater perceptions of threat would predict greater American identity and national identity levels in the dynamic condition for White participants.

Methods

Design

This experiment follows a 3 (cultural perception: dynamic vs static vs control) X 2 (ethnic group: Latinx immigrant vs white American) between-subject design. The primary dependent variables are American identity and national identity. Additional dependent variables include prejudice levels and perceived realistic and symbolic threats due to Latinx immigrants. A final open-ended question relating to American values is asked to provide information for future research interests.

Participants

A total of 209 participants (124 men, 84 women, 1 non-binary person) were recruited online via Amazon's Mechanical Turk. Participants' mean age was 37 years old ($SD = 11.79$ years), and they self-identified themselves as White (72.25%, $n = 151$) and Latino or Hispanic (27.75%, $n = 58$). White participants reported to have been in the US for more years ($M = 38.81$, $SD = 12.96$) than Latinx participants ($M = 30.26$, $SD = 7.98$). Participants completed the study with an average of 10.58 minutes ($SD = 5.74$ minutes). Because we focused on participants with firsthand exposure to American culture and identity that could answer a computer-based survey, we restricted eligibility to residents of the United States, over the age of 18, and with normal or corrected-to-normal vision. Participants were compensated for completing the study with a \$2.00 monetary gain.

Materials

Cultural change manipulations. The cultural change manipulation developed by Zárate et al. (2012) was used to prime participants with a dynamic or a static U.S. culture. Initially, all participants were presented with a paragraph exploring the idea of cultural change from both static and dynamic cultural ideologies (see Appendix A). This paragraph highlighted positive aspects of both ideologies. Then, participants were randomly assigned to one of three cultural change conditions: static culture, dynamic culture, or control. In each condition, participants responded to a series of questions about their opinions of current U. S. culture. The scale endpoints were manipulated to reflect that U.S. culture is changing drastically to accommodate Latinx persons (dynamic condition), that U.S. culture is changing somewhat to accommodate Latinx persons (static condition), about an unrelated topic (control condition).

Static culture. Participants were presented with a short paragraph describing that future population estimates will show even greater cultural assimilation towards traditional American culture, as 65% of Latinxs in the 2000 Census also labeled themselves “White,” which suggest that they see themselves assimilating quickly. Thus, this condition was supposed to prime participants to think that U.S. culture is not changing to accommodate Latinx culture; furthermore, that Latinx are changing to assimilate to the dominant U.S. culture. The end points of the questionnaire were manipulated so that participants could respond that U.S. culture is “not changing at all” to “changing somewhat” on a 6-point scale (See Appendix B).

Dynamic culture. Participants were presented with a short paragraph describing that although the U.S. is composed by people with different cultures and from different nations, there is still a strong demographic shift suggesting that the U.S. is increasingly changing to accommodate Latinx culture. Thus, this condition was supposed to prime participant to think that U.S. culture was changing to accommodate Latinx culture. The endpoints of the questionnaire were varied so that participants could respond that U.S. culture is “changing somewhat” to “changing drastically” on a 6-point scale (see Appendix C).

Control condition. Participants were presented with a short paragraph describing that the share of U.S. adults who are currently married has declined in recent decades. Thus, this condition was supposed to not prime participant to think about U.S. cultural change with respects of Latinxs. Participants were able to rate U.S. culture as “not changing at all” to “changing drastically” on a 13-point scale including both sets of end points from the other two conditions (see Appendix D).

American Identity Measure. Participants completed The American Identity Measure (Schwartz et al., 2012). This measure has two subscales: exploration and affiliation. Affiliation and exploration of participants American identity (e.g., “I have spent time trying to find out more about the United States, such as its history, traditions, and customs”) was measured using the 12 items in this scale. For this research we only analyzed the 9 items that measured the participants affiliation to American identity ($\alpha = .94$). All questions in this scale were presented in random order to participants, and all items were rated on a 7-point Likert scale from “Strongly disagree” to “Strongly agree.” Higher scores in this scale represented a stronger affiliation with an American identity.

National Identity Scale. Participants’ national attachment to the United States will be measured using the three items of the National Identity developed by Huddy and Khatib (2007) ($\alpha = .90$). The first item was “How important is being American to you?” The scale for this question was rated on a 7-point Likert scale from “Not at all important” to “Extremely Important.” The second item in this measure was “To what extent do you see yourself as a typical American?” The scale for this question was rated on a 7-point Likert scale from “None at all” to “Fully.” The third item was “How well does the term “American” describe you?” The scale for this question was rated on a 7-point Likert scale from “Not well at all” to “Extremely well.” All items in this measure were presented in random order to participants. Higher scores in this measure represented a stronger national identity.

Threat Scales. Participants completed the Realistic and Symbolic Threat Measure (Stephan et al., 1999). 8 items assessed realistic threats, such as economic costs, disease, job loss, education, crime, drugs, and welfare, perceived due to Latinx immigration (e.g.,

“Latino immigration has increased the tax burden on Americans”) ($\alpha = .93$). 7 items assessed symbolic threats, including education, religion, and social relationships, perceived due to Latinx immigration (e.g., “The values and beliefs of Latino immigrants regarding family issues and socializing children are basically quite similar to those of most Americans”) ($\alpha = .82$.) All items in both scales were presented in random order to participants, and all items were rated on a 7-point Likert scale from “Strongly disagree” to “Strongly agree.” These scales were combined for analysis, with higher scores representing greater perceived threat.

Xenophobia Scale. Participants completed Wilson-Daily et al. (2018) 7-item measure to assess their level of prejudice towards Latinx immigrants (e.g., “Latino immigrants take jobs away from people who were born here”) ($\alpha = .91$). All items were presented in random order to participants, and all items were rated on a 7-point Likert scale from “Strongly disagree” to “Strongly agree.” Higher scores indicated greater prejudice towards Latinx immigrants.

Demographic Questionnaire. Participants were asked to answer a series of demographic questions that were used in the analysis of this study. Participants were asked to self-report their age, gender, ethnicity, U.S. citizenship status, country of birth, the number of years they had lived in U.S., highest level of education completed, or highest degree received, and approximate household income. Additionally, participants were asked to rate themselves on their political outlook in two items. One item asked, “How would you describe your political outlook with regard to economic issues?” and the other asked, “How would you describe your political outlook with regard to social

issues?” Both items were rated on a 7-point Likert scale from “Very liberal” to “Very conservative.”

American Value. Participants were asked one open-ended question at the end of the survey. They were asked to describe in one or two terms what is the most important value for them as an American. The responses to this question were not used for the analysis of this study, and they will be used as information for future research in the areas of American values for Latinx immigrants.

Procedure

Participants were recruited online via Amazon's Mechanical Turk, and the study was listed as "Attitudes about U.S. culture." The description of the study read, "Participants are needed for a study in which they will answer a series of questions about their opinions of U.S. culture and their attitudes toward immigrant groups. Participants will complete several short surveys and a short demographics questionnaire. Those wishing to participate must be residents of the United States, over the age of 18, and must have normal or corrected-to-normal vision." After electronically signing an informed consent form with their Amazon Worker ID number, participants were provided with a link to the study which was hosted on Texas State's Qualtrics survey system. Participants accessed the experiment online through Qualtrics survey system. Participants read a paragraph describing cultural change in the United States (see Appendix A). Participants were then randomly assigned to one of the three conditions, in which they either read that U.S. culture is changing to accommodate Latinxs (dynamic condition), that Latinxs are changing to accommodate U.S. culture (static condition), or about an unrelated topic (control condition). Participants then completed the dependent measures. Participants

were first asked to answer the American Identity Measure (Schwartz et al., 2012) and the National Identity Scale (Huddy & Khatib, 2007). This two scales were counterbalanced and presented in random orders per participant. Then participants answered the Realistic Threat, Symbolic Threat (Stephan et al., 1999), and Xenophobia Scale (Wilson-Daily et al. (2018) . This three scales were counterbalanced and presented in random orders per participant. Following, participants were asked to self-report their demographics. Then they answered the open-ended question regarding an American value. Finally, participants were thanked and debriefed.

Results

Threat

We first conducted an exploratory analysis of the data and measures to assess any correlations among the dependent measures, political identity, and participant's gender. We found that most dependent measures had statistically significant correlations among themselves and political identity, $p < .0001$, and all of these are presented in Table 1. We did not find any significant correlation between the participant's gender and any dependent measure or political identification, $p > .05$. With a focus on the dependent measures that assessed threat, we found that realistic threat and American identity were positively correlated. The higher participants scored on realistic threat, the higher they scored on American identity, $r(209) = .34, p < .0001$. Realistic threat also presented a positive correlation with national identity. The higher participants scored on realistic threat, the higher they scored on national identity, $r(209) = .33, p < .0001$. Additionally, realistic threat was found to have a positive correlation with symbolic threat. The higher participants scored on realistic threat, the higher they scored on symbolic threat, $r(209) =$

.83, $p < .0001$. Further, a positive correlation between realistic threat and prejudice was found. The higher participants scored on realistic threat, the higher they scored on prejudice, $r(209) = .91, p < .0001$. Finally, realistic threat was found to have a positive correlation with political identity. The higher participants scored on realistic threat, the more conservative the participant scored in political identity, $r(209) = .68, p < .0001$.

Table 1

Correlations between Dependent Measures, Political Identity, and Participant's Gender

	American Identity	National Identity	Realistic Threat	Symbolic Threat	Prejudice	Political Identity	Gender
American Identity	1.00						
National Identity	.88***	1.00					
Realistic Threat	.34***	.33***	1.00				
Symbolic Threat	.39***	.40***	.83***	1.00			
Prejudice	.32***	.35***	.91***	.88***	1.00		
Political Identity	.46***	.48***	.68***	.68***	.73***	1.00	
Gender	.008	-.002	.038	-.009	-.015	-.011	1.00

*** $p < .0001$

We found similar significant patterns of correlations between the scores of symbolic threat and the other predictors. We found that symbolic threat and American identity were positively correlated. The higher participants scored on symbolic threat, the higher they scored on American identity, $r(209) = .39, p < .0001$. Additionally, symbolic threat presented a significant positive correlation with national identity. The higher participants scored on symbolic threat, the higher they scored on national identity, $r(209) = .40, p < .0001$. Moreover, a positive correlation between symbolic threat and prejudice was found. The higher participants scored on symbolic threat, the higher they scored on prejudice, $r(209) = .88, p < .0001$. Further, symbolic threat was found to have a positive correlation with political identity. The higher participants scored on symbolic threat, the more conservative the participant scored in political identity, $r(209) = .68, p < .0001$.

With a focus on threat, we analyzed the data to assess the hypothesis that White participants would express greater perceptions of threat by Latinx immigrants in the dynamic condition than in the static or control condition. A One-way ANOVA was conducted to assess the hypothesis by predicting perceived threat with experimental condition, political affiliation, and their interaction for White participants. The overall model was significant, $F(5, 145) = 131.01, p < .0001, R^2 = .51$. We had predicted that White participants in the dynamic condition would express higher perceptions of threats, but this was not supported by the model as there was no significant main effect of experimental condition on perceived threat, $p = .64$. Although, results revealed an unpredicted main effect of political identity on perceived threat, $F(1, 145) = 147.65, p < .0001, b = 46, SE = 0.07$. The more conservative participants ranked then greater perceive threats from Lantinx immigrants they expressed.

Prejudice

Based on the exploratory correlation analysis of the data, we found additional significant correlations between prejudice and other predictors (Table 1). We found that prejudice and American identity were positively correlated. The higher participants scored on prejudice levels, the higher they scored on American identity, $r(209) = .32, p < .0001$. Further, prejudice was positively correlated with national identity. The higher participants scored on prejudice levels, the higher they scored on national identity, $r(209) = .35, p < .0001$. Moreover, prejudice was found to have a positive correlation with political identity. The higher participants scored on prejudice levels, the more conservative the participant scored in political identity, $r(209) = .73, p < .0001$.

Focusing on prejudice, we analyzed the data to test our hypothesis that White participants would express greater prejudice toward Latinx immigrants in the dynamic condition than in the static or control conditions. A One-way ANOVA was conducted to assess this hypothesis with experimental condition, perceived threat, and their interaction included as predictors of prejudice. The overall model was significant, $F(5, 145) = 236.50, p < .001, R^2 = .89$. We predicted that White participants in the dynamic condition would express higher levels of prejudice, but this was not supported by the data as there was no significant main effect of experimental condition on condition, $p = .75$. However, we did find an unpredicted main effect of perceived threat on prejudice scores, $F(1, 145) = 1171.16, p < .001, b = 1.01, SE = 0.05$. Based on these results, the more participants perceived Latinxs as economic and symbolic threats, the greater prejudice they expressed.

American and National Identification

When we focus on American and national identity, we found additional significant correlations from the exploratory analysis of the data (Table 1). For instance, American identity and national identity were positively correlated. The higher participants scored on American identity, the higher they scored on national identity, $r(209) = .88, p < .0001$. Additionally, a significant positive correlation between American identity and political identity was found. The higher participants scored on American identity, the more conservative the participant scored in political identity, $r(209) = .46, p < .0001$. Similarly, we found a positive correlation between national identity and political identity. The higher participants scored on national identity, the more conservative the participant scored in political identity, $r(209) = .48, p < .0001$.

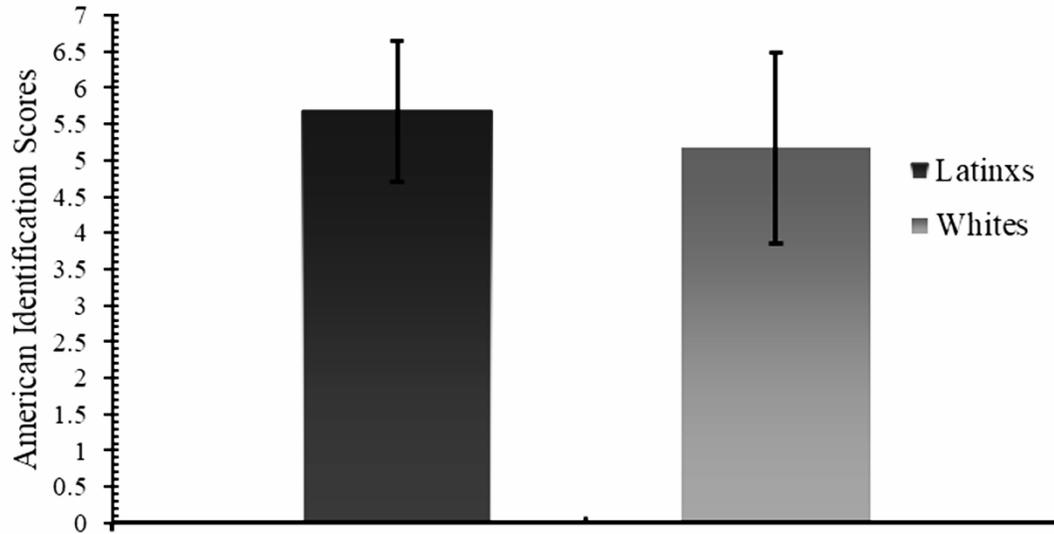
The data was analyzed with a focus on American and national identity to measure the validity of our hypothesis, which stated that White and Latinx participants would demonstrate higher levels of American and national identity in the dynamic condition. The analysis also tested the prediction we had made that Latinx participants would score higher in American and national identity than White participants. Separate 2 (condition: static vs dynamic vs control) X 2 (ethnicity: White vs Latinx) ANOVAs were conducted to analyze the main effect of experimental condition, the main effect of ethnicity, and their interaction as predictors for American and national identity. For this model, the years participants had lived in the U.S. was entered as a covariate, due to their significant difference between Whites ($M = 38.81, SD = 12.96$) and Latinxs ($M = 30.26, SD = 7.98$), $F(1, 206) = 22.00, p < .0001$. The overall model was not significant, $F(6, 201) = 1.44, p = .200, R^2 = .0413$. The predicted two-way interaction between experimental condition and

ethnicity was found not significant for the American or national identity measures, p 's = .576 and .362, respectively. We did find a significant main effect of ethnicity on American identity, $F(1, 201) = 5.17, p = 0.024, \eta^2 = .02$, in which Latinxs scored higher on American identity ($M = 5.69, SD = 0.97$) than Whites ($M = 5.21, SD = 1.32$). However, this effect did not vary across condition; moreover, the difference between Latinxs ($M = 5.53, SD = 1.44$) and Whites ($M = 5.02, SD = 1.67$) on National identity scores was not significant ($p = .056$). Thus, neither prediction was supported, and the mean differences we find on American identity between samples have small effect sizes with even smaller confidence intervals.

The hypothesis that greater perceptions of threat would predict greater American identity and national identity levels in the dynamic condition for White participants was tested through separate two-way ANOVAs, in which experimental condition, ethnicity, perceived threat, and their interaction were included as predictors for American and national identity scores. The number of years participants reported having lived in the US was included as a covariate in this model as well. The overall model was significant, $F(12, 195) = 3.82, p < .0001, R^2 = .190$. Partially supporting our predictions, the analysis found a significant main effect of perceived threat on American and national identity, in which greater perceived threat predicted higher American identity, $F(1, 195) = 15.06, p = .0001, \eta^2 = .06, b = 0.45$, and National identity, $F(1, 195) = 20.90, p < .0001, \eta^2 = .08, b = 0.42$. These effects, however, did not vary by condition. Under this model, it was found a two-way interaction between condition and ethnicity on American identity that was marginally significant, $F(2, 195) = 2.95, p = .055, \eta^2 = .02$.

Figure 1

American Identification Scores in the Static Condition



Note. Error bars represent +/- 1 Standard Deviation Values.

We had predicted that this interaction was going to result in the dynamic condition Latinx participants would show higher American identification than Whites. However, contrary to our hypothesis, paired comparisons showed that Latinx participants reported marginally significant higher American identification ($M = 5.68$, $SD = .97$) than White participants ($M = 5.17$, $SD = 1.32$) in the static condition, $t(82) = 1.89$, $p = .06$, $d = 0.04$ (Figure 1).

Further, the predicted three-way interaction between perceived threat, condition, ethnicity on American identity scores was marginally significant, $p = .083$. Follow-up regressions were conducted to analyze this interaction. For Latinx participants, greater perceptions of threat predicted greater American identity in the dynamic, $B = 0.54$, $t(15) = 2.50$, $p = .025$, $SE = .24$, and control conditions, $B = 0.53$, $t(20) = 2.78$, $p = .00115$, SE

= .20, but not in the static condition, $B = -0.17$, $t(17) = 0.71$, $p = .049$, $SE = .24$. We had not formulated any specific predictions for the Latinx sample with respect of this three-way interaction. Meanwhile, for White participants, contrary to our predictions, greater perceived threat predicted greater American identity in the static, $B = 0.49$, $t(48) = 3.86$, $p = .0003$, $SE = .13$, and control conditions, $B = 0.45$, $t(49) = 3.56$, $p = .0008$, $SE = .12$, but threat did not significantly predict a change in American identity in the dynamic condition ($p = .106$). These relationships do not support our hypothesis on dynamic condition and threat as factors of affiliation to American identity for the White sample.

Discussion

The results of this study suggest that Latinx persons may have greater identification with American culture compared to White persons, though this difference may be small. This contradicts the general assumption that American culture is inherently White culture (Devos & Banaji, 2005). This contradiction could be a result to the lack of research on American levels on White Americans (Nguyen, & Benet-Martínez, 2013). In this case, the lack of research on White samples contributes to the assumption that White is inherently American by not providing any other evidence against it. This assumption could increase the marginalization of ethnic minorities as it feeds the idea that ethnic groups need to assimilate to White practices to become American, which cannot be attained by all (Crisp, Stone, & Hall, 2006; Quintana, Herrera, & Nelson, 2010). Thus, future research should include White samples, which would eliminate the assumption that ethnic minorities do not identify with America in the same level. These results of the study show that by eliminating previous bias we could learn more about the dynamics between groups in the U.S.

Results were consistent with previous research showing that perceived immigration threats increase identification with the in-group among White Americans (Stephan et al., 1999). This study also showed that Latinx persons' American identification increases as they perceive Latino immigration as a threat. Thus, it is possible that as American identification strengthens among Latinx groups, identification with their ethnic culture may weaken. This explanation goes along with previous research that establishes that individuals who have a strong in-group identity often express more prejudice toward out-groups (Voci, 2006; Crisp, Stone, & Hall, 2006). Future research should then measure the participants' identification with their ethnic identity to see if the interaction between American identity and perceived threat can be explained by the differences found between the American identity and the ethnic identity of the participants.

Unexpectedly, American and National identity were not strengthened when participants were primed with a dynamic culture compared to a static culture. This could be explained if, rather than in-group identification, dynamic culture has a more significant effect on the perception of the out-group as research has established (Zárate et al., 2012).

Further, this study showed a marginal unpredicted interaction, in which Latinx participants showed higher levels of American identity than White participants in the static condition where Latinxs were described as changing to fit into U.S. culture. Thus, Latinx participants might have been also primed with the idea of assimilation in this condition, as the dominant culture does not have to accommodate to other cultures (Zárate et al., 2010). This could have had an impact on Latinx participants as they saw a

need to fulfill this view and answer in a way that shows them more assimilated, which could have translated into higher American identity levels. We did not measure attitudes toward assimilation or multiculturalism in this study. Future research should take these attitudes into account to more fully understand how they influence American identity.

A pressing limitation on this study was the size of our Latinx sample being small in comparison to the White sample. In this study, having a small sample could have impacted our results, which could explain the partially supported hypothesis or the unexpected marginal results. In the future, we should aim to increase our sample of Latinx participants by increasing our outreach to this community directly. For example, communicating directly with Latinx people and invite them to participate in future studies. This should increase the recruitment of Latinxs as it allows them to be more comfortable disclosing personal information, which may be hard for them due to the present political climate. Having a bigger sample of Latinxs would allow us to more fully test the effects of cultural change on American identity in this population. A bigger sample size would also allow us to more confidently draw conclusions about the results we find.

As the United States inevitably becomes more diverse, identifying the processes and effects involved in American identity affiliation will provide us with insight towards on how American identity will be defined in the future and its effects on society.

APPENDIX SECTION

Appendix A

Paragraph Presented to Participants Before Manipulation

We want you to think about how American culture is now and how it will be changing over the next few years. Experts are divided about how the recent census figures regarding ethnic populations are influencing our culture. Some people think that as ethnic minority populations grow in numbers, and more immigrants come to the country, American culture will change dramatically. The culture will become more diverse, with more bilingual populations, more diverse cultural values, and changes to the “American way of life”. Schools will have larger ethnic populations, and with it more bilingual education classes. The workforce will also have an increase in minority participation. Minorities will be working in fields that were not available to them before and many will eventually reach managerial positions. Because of the world economy, that diversity will provide more opportunities to expand to new markets. Many Latino holidays will be celebrated frequently in addition to the traditional American holidays. As the diversity increases, so will the number of inter-racial families. As such, American culture, and the people that live in the country, will change and adapt to new cultures and persons. The new culture will be a mosaic of past and new cultures. The diversity will strengthen the American way of life.

Others contend that “traditional” American culture will continue to dominate society. As more groups enter society, they will adopt traditional American culture and change

the incoming groups to adopt the current cultural values. Virtually all past immigration groups have followed a similar pattern. Groups merge and adopt the traditional American way of life within a generation. The leaders and people of America will continue to work hard to preserve the “traditional” American culture. Lawmakers will pass laws to help the new immigrants adjust to the American way of life. Most states are adopting, or have adopted, English only laws, providing a framework for a unified American culture. English will be learned by the minorities to follow and understand the American culture. Immigrants will adapt to the American way of life leading to assimilation into the American culture. In the end, a traditional way of life will strengthen our culture and our ability to continue to prosper.

In the following pages, we want your opinions about how American culture is changing regarding views of diversity and assimilation. There are no right or wrong answers. We are interested in your opinions about the future and how America should approach the growing ethnic populations.

Appendix B

Static Condition Paragraph and Items with Corresponding Endpoints

Population estimates for the nation's future suggest even greater cultural assimilation towards traditional American culture. Sixty five percent of the Latinos in the 2000 Census also labeled themselves “White”, suggesting that they see themselves assimilating quickly.

1. Imagine US culture in 20 years. In twenty years, how much will children need to speak another language in order to be competitive?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7
Being bilingual will not be important Speaking another language will be somewhat important

2. How are the beliefs and values of this country changing as a function of the mix of traditional US culture and Mexican immigrants?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7
US culture is not changing at all US culture is changing somewhat

3. US culture is

1 2 3 4 5 6 7
Becoming not at all diverse Becoming somewhat diverse

4. In response to the recent immigrant surge,

1 2 3 4 5 6 7
Americans are not changing at all Americans are changing somewhat

5. How are the beliefs and values of Latin immigrants regarding moral and religious issues changing as a function of American culture?

Latin immigrants are:
1 2 3 4 5 6 7
Not maintaining their diversity Maintaining some diversity

6. Latin immigrants are causing the rules and norms of American society to change.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7
Disagree strongly Agree somewhat

7. How much is the job market in America being affected by Mexican immigrant workers?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7
US job market is not changing at all US job market is changing somewhat

8. How much are American politics affected by Mexican immigrants?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7
Minorities do not have political power Minorities have some political power

9. How much is America's interpersonal style changing because of Latin immigrants?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7
US style is not changing at all US style is changing somewhat

10. How much are Latin immigrants causing American culture to change to accommodate them?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7
US culture is not changing to accommodate them US culture is changing somewhat to accommodate them

11. Imagine US culture in 20 years. How much will current immigration change American culture if immigration continues at its present rate?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7
US culture will not change at all US culture will change somewhat

12. Imagine US culture in 20 years. How much do you anticipate having to change your lifestyle to accommodate more immigrants?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7
Lifestyle will not change at all Lifestyle will change somewhat

13. Imagine US culture in 20 years. Because of the various cultural groups, how will your children's culture be different from yours?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7
Future culture will not be different Future culture will change somewhat

Appendix C

Dynamic Condition Paragraph and Items with Corresponding Endpoints

Although the United States is composed of people from different nations and cultures who speak many different languages and practice many different religions, the strong demographic shifts suggest that the U.S. is increasingly changing to accommodate Latino culture.

1. Imagine US culture in 20 years. In twenty years, how much will children need to speak another language in order to be competitive?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7
Being bilingual will be very important Speaking another language will be somewhat important

2. How are the beliefs and values of this country changing as a function of the mix of traditional US culture and Mexican immigrants?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7
US culture is changing dramatically US culture is changing somewhat

3. US culture is

1 2 3 4 5 6 7
Becoming highly diverse Becoming somewhat diverse

4. In response to the recent immigrant surge,

1 2 3 4 5 6 7
Americans are not changing at all Americans are changing somewhat

5. How are the beliefs and values of Latin immigrants regarding moral and religious issues changing as a function of American culture?

Latin immigrants are:

1 2 3 4 5 6 7
Actively maintaining their diversity Maintaining some diversity

6. Latin immigrants are causing the rules and norms of American society to change.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7
Agree strongly Agree somewhat

7. How much is the job market in America being affected by Mexican immigrant workers?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7
US job market is changing dramatically US job market is changing somewhat

8. How much are American politics affected by Mexican immigrants?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7
Minorities have great political power Minorities have some political power

9. How much is America's interpersonal style changing because of Latin immigrants?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7
US style is changing at dramatically US style is changing somewhat

10. How much are Latin immigrants causing American culture to change to accommodate them?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7
US culture is changing dramatically to accommodate them US culture is changing somewhat to accommodate them

11. Imagine US culture in 20 years. How much will current immigration change American culture if immigration continues at its present rate?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7
US culture will change dramatically US culture will change somewhat

12. Imagine US culture in 20 years. How much do you anticipate having to change your lifestyle to accommodate more immigrants?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7
Lifestyle will change dramatically Lifestyle will change somewhat

13. Imagine US culture in 20 years. Because of the various cultural groups, how will your children's culture be different from yours?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7
Future culture will be dramatically different Future culture will change somewhat

Appendix D

Control Condition Paragraph and Items with Corresponding Endpoints

The share of U.S. adults who are currently married has declined in recent decades.

The share of adults ages 18 to 44 who have ever lived with an unmarried partner (59%) has surpassed the share who has ever been married (50%).

1. Imagine US culture in 20 years. In twenty years, how much will children need to speak another language in order to be competitive?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13

Being bilingual will not be important

Being bilingual will be very important

2. How are the beliefs and values of this country changing as a function of the mix of traditional US culture and Mexican immigrants?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13

US culture is not changing at all

US culture is changing dramatically

3. US culture is

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13

Becoming not at all diverse

Becoming highly diverse

4. In response to the recent immigrant surge,

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13

Americans are not changing at all

Americans are changing somewhat

5. How are the beliefs and values of Latin immigrants regarding moral and religious issues changing as a function of American culture?

Latin immigrants are:

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13

Not maintaining their diversity

Actively maintaining their diversity

6. Latin immigrants are causing the rules and norms of American society to change.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13

Disagree strongly

Agree strongly

7. How much is the job market in America being affected by Mexican immigrant workers?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13

US job market is not changing at all

US job market is changing dramatically

8. How much are American politics affected by Mexican immigrants?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13

Minorities have no political power

Minorities have great political power

9. How much is America's interpersonal style changing because of Latin immigrants?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13

US style is not changing at all

US style is changing dramatically

10. How much are Latin immigrants causing American culture to change to accommodate them?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13

US culture is not changing at all to accommodate them

US culture is changing dramatically to accommodate them

11. Imagine US culture in 20 years. How much will current immigration change American culture if immigration continues at its present rate?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13

US culture will not change at all

US culture will change dramatically

12. Imagine US culture in 20 years. How much do you anticipate having to change your lifestyle to accommodate more immigrants?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13

Lifestyle will not change at all

Lifestyle will change dramatically

13. Imagine US culture in 20 years. Because of the various cultural groups, how will your children's culture be different from yours?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13

Future culture will not be different

Future culture will change dramatically

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