

# CROSSING THE CORDILLERA

## Immigrant Attributes and Chilean Attitudes

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*Abstract: Are individuals opposed to immigration because of perceived job competition with immigrants? Despite almost two decades of research, the literature on immigration attitudes continues to struggle for a clear answer. This study is designed to evaluate the labor competition hypothesis in an alternative and important immigration context, Chile. The cultural proximity of natives and immigrants in Chile mitigates the issue of cultural threat and thus permits a focused appraisal of the role of economic competition. Also, the prevalence of both high- and low-skilled immigrant labor may generate competition in diverse employment sectors in Chile. Using data from an original Internet survey experiment, I test how an immigrant's skill level, country of origin, and ethnicity influence Chilean attitudes toward immigration. The results suggest that individual immigration attitudes are not influenced by concerns over job competition but rather evaluations as to the broader economic effects of certain types of immigrants. Well-educated Chileans, like their European and American counterparts, prefer immigrants who pursue high-skill employment.*

Most of the scholarly work analyzing immigration attitudes focuses on individuals within highly industrialized countries. Comparative scholars continue to use the same cases (United States, Canada, and European states) in progressively refined efforts to understand the mechanisms driving variation in attitudes toward immigrants and immigration. Although much of the research on attitudes is confined to highly developed countries, over 40 percent of the world's international migrants reside in developing countries (Ratha and Shaw 2007). In many cases, such as in Latin America, transnational migration is characterized by intraregional migration of culturally similar groups in search of work. Whereas scholars examining attitudes in Europe and the United States are forced to dissect a complex web of influential cultural differences (language, religion, etc.), many of those cultural issues are largely controlled for in Latin America. This dynamic creates an excellent opportunity to engage in a targeted assessment of the attitudinal implications of economic competition between native citizens and immigrants.

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In recent decades Chile has become a highly attractive destination for a wide variety of immigrants. Much like immigration to the north, the influx of immigrants into Chile generates extensive social and political attention. Issues concerning “foreigners stealing natives’ jobs” emerged in the late 1990s (Martínez Pizarro 2005), highlighting the perceived economic implications often associated with immigration. Theories articulating how perceived economic and cultural threats relate to immigration attitudes would suggest that Chileans are more likely to support immigration by culturally similar immigrants and economic noncompetitors (immigrants with a different economic skill profile than their own). But do Chileans really respond to the perceived threat of job competition from immigrants?

In order to assess how the economic attributes of immigrants affect attitudes, I utilize data from a unique survey experiment conducted in Chile. The experiment focuses specifically on how individuals evaluate immigrants with certain economic skill profiles. The cultural proximity of migrants and natives in Latin America creates a context in which group-based biases are less complex and in which economic roots of anti-immigration attitudes should be especially identifiable. The experiment also addresses two key features of group-based biases—national and ethnic stereotypes—by including country of origin and ethnicity in the experiment. By manipulating the ethnicity, country of origin, and economic skill level of individual immigrants in an experimental framework, I can assess how these factors shape attitudes toward immigrants. This targeted assessment of economic competition indicates that the skill profile of an immigrant has a strong effect on attitudes toward the immigrant. However, immigration preferences are not driven by fears of individual economic competition but rather evaluations of what type of immigrant can best contribute to the country’s overall economic development. Also, despite expectations that Chileans would be less supportive of two stigmatized immigrant groups (Peruvians and ethnic minorities), the results suggest that at least among this sample of well-educated Chileans, there is a high degree of acceptance and support for these groups.

#### IMMIGRATION ATTITUDES AND THREAT PERCEPTION

A significant portion of the research examining immigration attitudes frames the issue in terms of immigrants and the threat they potentially pose to an individual or group. The theoretical framework for these threat-based arguments stems from formal economic models and sociopsychological theories of intergroup dynamics and conflict. There is a wide range of comparative evidence from highly developed countries that provides somewhat conflicting accounts as to the relative importance of these two types of threat in shaping immigration attitudes. Scholars continue to aggressively debate whether labor competition between natives and migrants or concerns over the broader economy influence attitudes, while trying to wade through a complicated set of collinear noneconomic factors.

*The Economics of Immigration Attitudes*

Scholars frequently examine individual perceptions of economic issues (personal and national) in an effort to understand the wide variation in immigration attitudes that exists between individuals and across countries. A model used often to develop the theoretical attitudinal expectations associated with labor competition is the factor proportions model (Mayda 2006; Scheve and Slaughter 2001).<sup>1</sup> The model suggests that as immigrants flow between countries, the relative abundance of skilled and unskilled labor has important economic ramifications. In economies where low-skilled labor is abundant (e.g., the United States), low-skilled immigrants will provide competition for native low-skilled workers. This notion of labor market competition can be extended to all workers: an immigrant as skilled as a native worker becomes a threat because of direct job competition and by potentially lowering wages. This micro-level perspective has received varying support. Within the United States and cross-nationally there is some evidence in support of labor competition (Facchini and Mayda 2008; Mayda 2006; Scheve and Slaughter 2001); however, these studies often rely on indirect measures of competition such as level of education as a proxy for skill.

More recent work directly testing the labor competition hypothesis finds little evidence that a sense of competition exists, especially among high-skilled workers (Hainmueller, Hiscox, and Margalit 2011; Hainmueller and Hiscox 2007, 2010; O'Connell 2011). Citizens in highly developed countries seem to uniformly prefer highly skilled immigrants, and low-skilled natives are often more anti-immigration than their high-skilled (well-educated) counterparts (Hainmueller and Hiscox 2010). Yet there is evidence that workers in the high-technology sector in the United States are more opposed to immigration on H1-B visas (high-skill specialty occupations) (Malhotra, Margalit, and Mo 2013). These findings indicate that the failure of other scholars to uncover economic threat is a function of the dynamics of magnitude versus prevalence. In other words, most nationally representative surveys in the United States and Europe do not include a significant population that is actually in economic competition with immigrant workers. Other than this recent effort to oversample areas with salient high-skilled immigrant competition (in high-tech counties in the United States), there has been little effort to evaluate labor market competition while accounting for prevalence.

Furthermore, economic fears are not necessarily tied to only job competition. Concerns about immigrants stressing social services and the welfare system are common in the United States and Europe. Recent experimental evidence suggests that citizen concerns tend to follow issues related to the broad impact of immigration rather than individualized competition (Harell et al. 2012). A particular type of immigrant can invoke concerns related to larger macroeconomic trends such as unemployment and dependence on the welfare state, as less-skilled immigrants are perceived as potentially contributing to both (Harell et al. 2012). The perception of immigrants as a fiscal burden could be linked to the widespread prefer-

1. Scholars also derive similar attitudinal expectations from a version of the Heckscher-Ohlin model without factor-price insensitivity (Mayda 2006; Scheve and Slaughter 2001).

ence for high-skilled immigrants in many highly developed countries. It also may be the case that individuals equate skill level and education, and the more highly educated are thought to be able to adapt to a new host society both economically and culturally (O'Connell 2011).

### *Culture, Complexity, and Experiments*

While economists tend to emphasize the economic determinants of immigration attitudes, there are a large number of noneconomic factors that also influence attitudes. A wide range of immigration scholars depict one of the crucial factors influencing immigration attitudes in terms of the cultural threat that certain groups of immigrants can engender among native citizens (Burns and Gimpel 2000; Citrin, Reingold, and Green 1990; McLaren 2003; Pettigrew, Wagner, and Christ 2007; Sniderman, Hagendoorn, and Prior 2004). Culturally dissimilar immigrant groups may generate increased opposition to immigration (Sniderman, Hagendoorn, and Prior 2004). Certain forms of contact and a shared sense of marginalization, however, may diminish this sense of threat (Fetzer 2000).

These studies, in conjunction with the economic work described above, suggest a multifaceted process in which economic and noneconomic factors operate simultaneously to shape attitudes. However, much of the early work on immigration attitudes exploring economic and cultural determinants uses general immigration questions that fail to identify who is actually immigrating. (See Scheve and Slaughter 2001 for an example of this type of question.) In the United States, for instance, the assumption would be that individuals were likely to think of immigration by low-skilled workers who were racially distinct (e.g., Mexican immigrants) and spoke a language other than English. But across the United States, geographic regions can have highly distinct immigrant populations and thus entirely different reference points in thinking about immigration. According to both the economic and cultural threat models, it should matter enormously who individuals think of when asked about immigration. Given that certain patterns of migration have intertwined economic and cultural features, scholars turned to experimental work to dissect these various forms of economic and cultural threat. A number of scholars find that the racial, linguistic, religious, and national profiles of immigrants can have a substantial impact on immigration attitudes (Ayers et al. 2009; Brader, Valentino, and Suhay 2008; Hainmueller and Hangartner 2013; Hopkins 2014; Sniderman, Hagendoorn, and Prior 2004).

Although this experimental work advances our understanding of immigration attitudes by transforming our mode of thinking to incorporate the varied characteristics of immigrants, it still has a number of limitations. First, among experimental efforts to explore the influence of labor market competition, there remains significant debate as to whether individual economic concerns actually matter (Hainmueller and Hiscox 2010; Hainmueller and Hopkins 2014; Malhotra, Margalit, and Mo 2013). Second, the complex set of stereotypes that accompany an immigrant's national origin present particular difficulties for scholars analyzing attitudes in North America and Europe. For instance, Hainmueller and Hangartner (2013) find that Swiss citizens, who are often responsible for making naturalization decisions

about immigrants who live in their communities, are highly influenced by the country of origin of the immigrant. This may imply that certain groups, based on country of origin, are discriminated against because they are viewed as culturally inferior and a threat to a society's way of life (Hainmueller and Hangartner 2013, 28). In this particular study, however, Swiss citizens were unaware of the ethnicity of a particular immigrant and are most likely inferring ethnicity from country of origin. Thus the independent effect of ethnicity remains unclear. Another study (Malhotra, Margalit, and Mo 2013) uses broad national identities (Indian, Russian, Canadian) to experimentally examine cultural threat, even though the national identity of immigrants is a blunt measure and it is not clear what characteristics (language, religion, or ethnicity, etc.) may be driving an individual's response (Hopkins 2014; Sniderman, Hagendoorn, and Prior 2004). Lastly, to the author's knowledge all existing experimental work looks at immigration in highly developed countries where low-skilled immigration dominates. Thus the vast majority of experimental research finds no evidence that labor competition influences immigration attitudes because it is simply not prevalent in most high-skilled sectors (Malhotra, Margalit, and Mo 2013). Overall, despite the progress made by experiment-based research, there is still significant ambiguity around the relative importance of labor market competition, especially among more skilled workers, and how the national and ethnic identity of immigrants impacts attitudes toward them.

Given the limitations of previous work focusing on immigration to the United States and Europe, this study utilizes the economic and cultural dynamics of immigration to Chile and a unique experimental framework to robustly test the labor market competition hypothesis and address the impact of country of origin and ethnicity. To overcome a key limitation of most prior studies, I use a sample of respondents predominantly from Chile's capital, where the arrival of both high- and low-skilled immigrant labor is prevalent. Where previous studies use country of origin as an identifying characteristic of immigrants, and scholars are left to wonder how respondents use that information heuristically, this study explicitly models or controls for associated underlying stereotypes (language, religion, ethnicity, economic skill level, and country of origin). Additionally, the cultural proximity—shared language and religion—of natives and immigrants can minimize the likelihood of perceived cultural threat (Carvacho 2010; Sirlopu and Oudenhoven 2013), thus creating a context in which economic competition is potentially more salient. The experiment focuses specifically on immigrants pursuing work visas rather than citizenship or amnesty, which have the potential to trigger cultural concerns among respondents. By examining an alternative migration context and structuring the experiment to emphasize immigrant skill level and pursuit of employment, I can test the labor competition hypothesis under conditions conducive to competition, while also isolating the effect of two key noneconomic factors: ethnicity and country of origin.

#### CHILE: AN EMERGING MAGNET FOR IMMIGRANTS

Although immigrants in Chile do not constitute an enormous proportion of the population (less than 3 percent), the relative growth of Chile's immigrant

population over the past two decades exceeds that of almost all Latin American countries and many highly developed countries as well. This influx of immigrants has the potential to create an anti-immigrant backlash in communities where immigrants choose to settle and thus raises normative concerns regarding social cohesion in one of Latin America's strongest economies.<sup>2</sup> Peruvian immigrants that tend to occupy low-skill jobs such as domestic service and construction have recently arrived in increasing numbers. Between 2002 and 2008, immigration to Chile increased by approximately 70 percent (International Organization for Migration 2015). These new arrivals are not simply originating from one source, but regional migration, especially among bordering countries, predominates. A large majority (67 percent) of immigrants arriving in Chile come from South American countries with wide-ranging levels of economic development (Martínez Pizarro 2005). Additionally, immigration from countries belonging to the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) has increased by 92 percent since 2006, bringing an additional influx of highly skilled workers (Sottorff and Pérez 2012). These patterns suggest that Chile is increasingly becoming an important regional migration hub for a variety of skilled and unskilled workers, which distinguishes this emerging market from many highly developed economies that experience predominantly low-skilled immigration.

Do Chileans particularly oppose immigration, as compared to regional neighbors and other receiving nations throughout the world? Figure 1 shows the levels of support for a restrictive immigration policy across a number of highly developed countries and four Latin American countries. Chile is comparable to many countries in both Europe and Latin America in terms of level of support for restrictive immigration policy.

However, as figure 2 demonstrates, Chileans are far more likely than their US, Canadian, or European counterparts to agree that natives should receive hiring priority when jobs are scarce. Given that Argentina, Mexico, and Brazil share a similar level of support for native hiring, this may signal that among emerging economies in Latin America there is a heightened concern over job competition as it relates to immigration. It also mirrors attitudes in Ireland, where 73.7 percent supported native job priority in 1999 (World Values Survey 2009). Ireland at the time was an emerging destination for Polish immigrants, who are frequently white and Catholic. Where cultural differences between natives and immigrants are less salient, individuals may potentially focus more on the economic implications of immigration, such as competition for jobs.

The recent increase of regional migration to Chile has led to certain concerns among Chileans: stress on social services, job competition, and rising unemployment, as well as the "backwardness" of Andean culture (González, Sirlopu, and Kessler 2010; Martínez Pizarro 2005; Staab and Maher 2006).<sup>3</sup> The two largest

2. There is varied evidence as to the effect of an influx and subsequent contact with immigrants. See Hopkins (2010) for a succinct review of these competing findings.

3. Unemployment levels in Chile have fluctuated between 6.5 percent and 10 percent since 2010. Most recently the government has responded to an upswing in unemployment by increasing jobless benefits (Woods 2012).

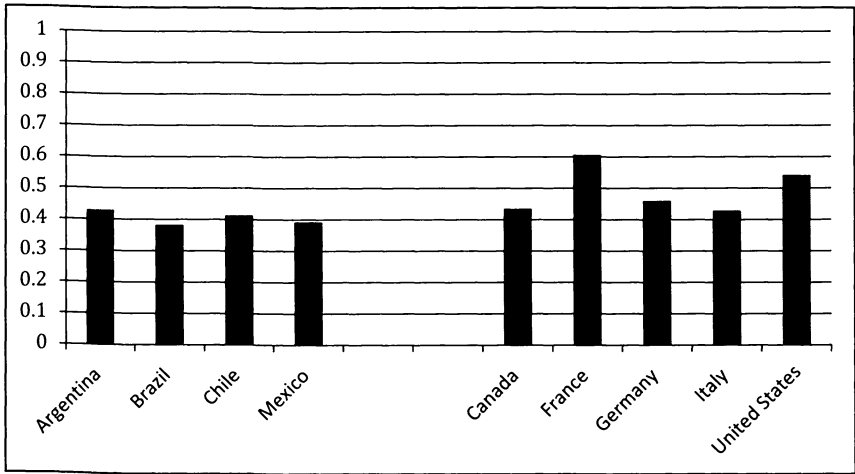


Figure 1 National support for restrictive immigration policy. Source: Author computations based on data provided in World Values Survey (2009).

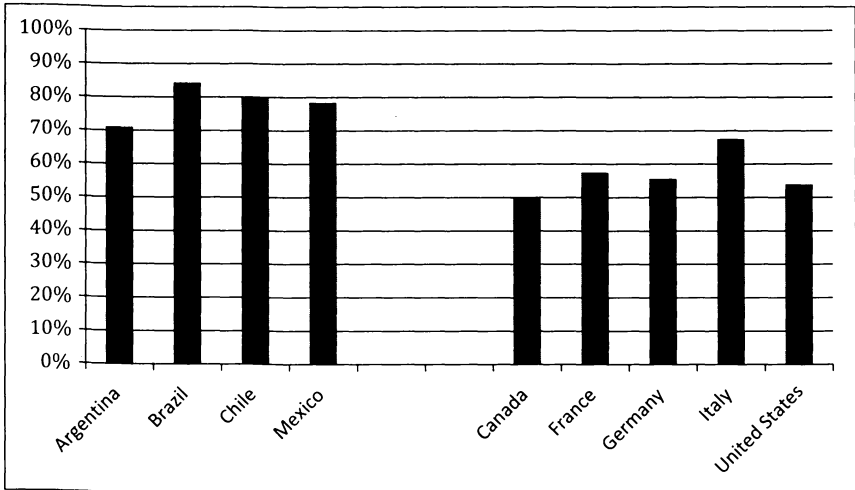


Figure 2 National support for native job priority over immigrants. Source: Author computations based on data provided in World Values Survey (2009).

groups of immigrants in Chile are Peruvians and Argentines, who constitute 37 percent and 17 percent respectively of the overall immigrant population (Departamento de Extranjería y Migración 2008). However, it is Peruvians who are heavily stereotyped along racial and class lines. Those stereotypes are often subsumed by national identity; Staab and Maher (2006) point out that a stereotypical

representation of a Peruvian immigrant is an indigenous, uneducated, and uncultured individual. This frame is important because it incorporates some of the key elements identified in the immigration literature related to threat. Peruvians (at least in their stereotypical form) should represent a distinct out-group threat and potentially threaten the employment of low-income (less educated) Chileans.<sup>4</sup> Argentine immigrants, who come from a society with a much larger percentage of individuals that identify as white and also have a higher average educational level than Peruvians, do not attract the social, political, or media attention that Andean immigrants do. This immigration dynamic, one marked by ethnically and economically distinct but salient immigrant groups, creates an opportunity to thoroughly explore the impact of three potentially important immigrant attributes: skill level, ethnicity, and country of origin.

#### EXPERIMENTING WITH CHOICE

In order to test the labor market hypothesis as well as the effect of ethnicity and country of origin in shaping Chilean attitudes toward immigrants, I conducted a unique online survey experiment of Chileans. The results I present below are based on 315 responses to an emailed survey experiment conducted using the Qualtrics survey program.<sup>5</sup>

The experiment uses a choice framework (simplified conjoint design) as well as a modified repeated measure factorial design to test the importance of the three aforementioned immigrant characteristics. Each respondent was given a prompt asking them to make a hypothetical choice between two immigrants, deciding which should receive a visa to live and work in Chile.<sup>6</sup> After reading the prompt, each respondent viewed side-by-side photos of the two immigrants with bulleted descriptions of the country of origin of the immigrant and the type of work they were pursuing (see the appendix). The photos provide the experimental treatment associated with ethnicity.<sup>7</sup> After viewing the descriptions, respondents were then asked to choose which immigrant should receive a visa. Next, each respondent evaluated the degree to which they felt the government should issue a visa for each immigrant (randomized order).

4. Despite the acceptance of these stereotypes within Chilean society, the actual profile of Peruvian immigrants diverges greatly from this representation. Using Chilean census data, Martínez Pizarro (2005) finds that the perceived influx of immigrants is actually fairly small. During months of interviews with Peruvian immigrants and employers, Staab and Maher (2006) found that the Peruvian women contradicted most stereotypes—they were not from indigenous communities, they were well-educated, and they often held professional positions before emigrating.

5. In order to conduct the survey experiment, I utilized an email database provided by a Chilean university that includes a wide range of individuals not necessarily formerly associated with the university (former and prospective students, businesses, news agencies, government, etc.).

6. In designing the experiment I drew from design elements and question wording in work by Harell et al. (2012) and Hainmueller and Hopkins (2014).

7. Rather than using a photo bank and a complex morphing strategy, I selected the two photos based on informal qualitative interviews with Chileans who readily distinguished the two women by ethnicity. One photo is drawn from a BBC Mundo (2011) interview and the other is from my own travels in Latin America, used with permission from the subject.



The description and photos serve to provide very clear information for the respondent.<sup>8</sup> By showing a photo and describing the country of origin, it helps dissect the various characteristics that national origin is often associated with, such as ethnicity. Rather than describe the educational attainment of the individual, I describe the type of work the immigrant is pursuing. This provides a more direct test of the competition hypothesis because skill level and educational attainment are not necessarily accurate predictors of the type of employment an immigrant will pursue or find (Chiswick 2011; Martínez Pizarro 2005). Although the experiment does not explicitly describe the linguistic or religious characteristics of each immigrant, I largely control for these two factors—found to be important in determining immigration attitudes in a number of studies (Chandler and Tsai 2001; Hopkins 2014; Sniderman, Hagendoorn, and Prior 2004)—by using immigrants from predominantly Catholic and Spanish speaking neighboring countries.<sup>9</sup>

Each respondent was presented only one pairing and asked to make a choice as to which immigrant should receive a visa. The four different randomly assigned pairings of immigrants encompass all possible combinations of the three characteristics. Table 1 provides a clear description of each of the four randomly assigned pairings.

Each immigrant characteristic was specifically selected to reflect immigration dynamics in Chile and most accurately test the labor competition hypothesis. In the experiment, the immigrant is either from Argentina or Peru, which, as previously noted, are the two national groups that make up over half of the immigrant population in Chile. One immigrant is white and the other mestizo, in order to test how Chileans respond to an immigrant from a racial out-group. Similar experimental work (Harell et al. 2012) utilized two minority immigrants, which cannot adequately test the in-group/out-group dynamic that much of cultural threat theory rests on. The selection of the type of work being pursued by both immigrants was strategic in two ways. First, there is a heavy concentration of Peruvian immigrant women working in domestic service (Martínez Pizarro 2005), thus this depiction fits with conceptions of an important group of immigrant workers in Chile. Second, a wide range of academic degrees in Chile carry the title “engineer,” so an immigrant pursuing a job generally described as “engineer” could

8. There are a number of potential complications with using facial photos in a choice experiment. For instance, superficial judgments from faces are predictive of a number of different social and political outcomes (e.g., electoral success) (Ballew and Todorov 2007; Lawson et al. 2010). Todorov and colleagues (2008) argue that facial evaluations occur along two critical dimensions or traits: trustworthiness and dominance. I pretested the two photos using a small pool of Amazon Mechanical Turk workers ( $n = 50$ )—a low-cost option for experimental research (Berinsky et al. 2012)—and had Turk workers randomly evaluate one of the two photos along three traits: trustworthiness, dominance, and femininity. There was no statistically significant difference between the two photos on any of the three traits. Other scholars suggest that facial similarity between respondent and photo subject (Bailenson et al. 2008) and attractiveness (Efrain and Patterson 1974) can also influence decisions. Even among whites, there is a preference for the nonwhite immigrant suggesting that facial similarity is not driving the results. Also, the two women were rated equally in terms of femininity, which O’Toole and colleagues (1998) suggest is largely synonymous with attractiveness.

9. There are certainly differences between Peruvian, Argentine, and Chilean Spanish, and depending on your region of origin in each country, accents are quite distinguishable. However, in each case the respondent is likely to presume the immigrant speaks Spanish.

*Table 1 Randomly assigned immigrant pairings w/ three characteristics*

	Immigrant 1	Immigrant 2
Pairing 1	White Argentina Engineer	Mestizo Peru Housemaid
Pairing 2	White Argentina Housemaid	Mestizo Peru Engineer
Pairing 3	White Peru Engineer	Mestizo Argentina Housemaid
Pairing 4	White Peru Housemaid	Mestizo Argentina Engineer

represent competition to a large number of high-skilled workers.<sup>10</sup> Lastly, both potential immigrants are female, which reflects the high percentage of female immigrants in Chile but also helps eliminate possible confounding factors associated with social evaluations of male and female faces (Todorov et al. 2008).

The sample of respondents included in the experiment is highly educated (88 percent have some university education), as I used a sample derived from a university database of emails. This sample attribute has two important advantages. First, as outlined in the review of literature above, highly educated individuals are more likely to be tolerant of culturally distinct immigrants. This would suggest that cultural concerns are a less salient issue among this set of respondents, who may be more focused on the economic implications of immigration. Second, many prior studies have not been able to adequately test one side of the competition hypothesis: competition among high-skilled workers. This sample provides a direct avenue for testing that form of competition. Therefore, although the sample is not representative of the broader population in terms of educational attainment, this characteristic assists in developing a more accurate test of labor market competition.<sup>11</sup>

The sample includes individuals ranging in age from twenty to seventy-seven, with an average age of fifty-one. Substantially more men participated than women; only 30 percent of the respondents were female. In terms of ethnicity the sample largely identified as white (72 percent) and mestizo (22 percent). Although the sample mirrors the Chilean population in some areas, such as ethnicity, it diverges considerably in others (e.g., gender, education). Using an unrepresentative convenience sample obviously undermines generalizability of the results, but the

10. A substantial proportion (20 percent) of the respondents reported their profession as "engineer."

11. Malhotra, Margalit, and Mo (2013) oversample in areas where H1-B visa holders would likely compete for jobs (e.g., Silicon Valley) and find evidence that immigration attitudes are related to job competition.

focus of the paper is to identify key levers impacting immigration attitudes rather than to make broad conclusions about the Chilean population in general.

In the following section, I present results from the dichotomous choice that respondents were asked to make between immigrants, as well as the separate evaluations of support for each immigrant to receive a visa.

## RESULTS

Each respondent was asked to make a choice between two immigrants in a randomly assigned pairing. Within each randomly assigned group, if 50 percent of respondents chose one immigrant and 50 percent chose the other, we could conclude that there is indifference toward the two immigrants. In other words, the combination of characteristics creates an equal likelihood of being chosen. Therefore, a first, basic step is to examine the proportions within each pairing to determine if the respondents are indifferent.<sup>12</sup> Table 2 presents the results from a simple equality of proportions test. Each proportion of responses is significantly different from 0.5 except in the first pairing. This indicates that respondents are most likely indifferent with respect to the immigrants in pairing 1 but have a marked preference for a particular immigrant in the other pairings. Substantively, one strong pattern emerges from this simple inspection of the dichotomous choice data: in the three pairings that do not demonstrate indifference, respondents overwhelmingly prefer the immigrant who is looking for work as an engineer.

One potential limitation of this approach is that the survey forces individuals to make a choice even if they are indifferent. Although it is likely that random choice across a significant portion of the sample would result in indifference (i.e., individuals arbitrarily picking immigrant 1 or 2 because they are indifferent), it is possible that there could be some systematic reason that motivates choice apart from the characteristics of the immigrants. To test for this possible relationship, I conducted the same equality of proportions test but only for respondents who rate each immigrant differently on the 1 to 7 visa-support scale (equal ratings would possibly indicate indifference). The results (not shown) mirror those of the whole sample: indifference in the first pairing and a statistically significant proportion choosing the immigrant pursuing work as an engineer in the three other pairings.

To more thoroughly analyze the choice portion of the experiment, I use a logit model to estimate the effect of each immigrant characteristic on the likelihood of selecting immigrant 1 or immigrant 2.<sup>13</sup> In this case there are four assigned

12. One potential confounding factor is the ethnicity of the respondent. Harell et al. (2012) restrict their analysis to white Canadians, creating an additional conditional relationship because minority respondents are likely to view minority immigrants differently than their white counterparts. Although I estimate models using the full sample, I reestimate the analysis of proportions and primary choice model using just white respondents ( $n = 227$ ) and find substantively similar results. (See appendix tables A1 and A2.)

13. Although conditional logit models are frequently used to examine the results of multiple choice experiments because they allow for researchers to account for the characteristics associated with the chooser and choice, respondents in this experiment were only asked to make a single choice. See Iyen-

Table 2 Equality of proportions test

Pairing	Mean
1	0.585 (0.059)
2	0.806*** (0.042)
3	0.291*** (0.051)
4	0.745*** (0.049)

Standard errors in parentheses.

\*\*\* $z < .01$ ; \*\* $z < .05$ .

pairings (choice sets) and within each pairing two different orderings, which are randomized. The goal is to determine which factors or immigrant characteristics increase the likelihood of choosing one immigrant over another. Table 3 presents the results from a logit model estimating the effect of each immigrant characteristic while controlling for the pairing in which the choice was made.

The dependent variable is coded dichotomously, indicating a respondent's preference for immigrant 1 (I1) or immigrant 2 (I2). Both the economic immigrant characteristic and ethnicity characteristic significantly affect the probability of choosing I2 over I1. The probability of choosing I2 increases when I2 is pursuing work as an engineer. This confirms the pattern in the proportions observed above. Additionally, ethnicity has a significant effect on the probability of selecting I2: the probability decreases if the immigrant is white, suggesting that respondents are more supportive of the minority immigrant. The effect associated with national origin is insignificant. One unique element of these findings is that there is a significant preference for an immigrant from an ethnic out-group, which counters the theory underpinning the cultural threat argument.

The analysis of the dichotomous choice data is somewhat limiting, however, because it does not give us a precise sense of the variation that may exist in attitudes toward each of the two immigrants. Respondents were asked to choose one immigrant over another even if they preferred that the government provide visas to both potential immigrants or not provide visas at all. To address this, each respondent was also asked to evaluate their level of support for each respective immigrant after making a dichotomous choice. To analyze this data, I begin by comparing the means of visa support across immigrant characteristics in table 4.

Note that in every instance, the mean support for an immigrant's visa is greater for engineers, and there is a pattern of greater support for mestizo immigrants as

gar and Hahn (2009) or Blais et al. (2011) for recent applications of the conditional logit model. I do, however, examine the robustness of the standard logit model by estimating a conditional logit model, in essence a fixed effects model, using the pairing as the grouping category. This would help control for the effect associated with the alternative choice since none of the pairings overlap in terms of alternatives. The results (appendix, table A.3) mirror those of the logit model with pairing dummies (table 3).

Table 3 *Immigrant choice as a function of immigrant characteristics*

Parameters	Logit estimates
Engineer	1.553*** (0.257)
Argentina	-0.847** (0.256)
White	-1.005*** (0.257)
Pairing 2	0.514 (0.383)
Pairing 3	0.356 (0.340)
Pairing 4	0.341 (0.347)
Constant	-0.131 (0.328)
<i>N</i>	315
Pseudo R <sup>2</sup>	0.161
Log-likelihood	-183.118

Standard errors in parentheses.

\*\*\**p* < .01; \*\**p* < .05.Table 4 *Mean values of visa support by immigrant characteristics*

	Engineer		Housemaid		Combined
	Argentina	Peru	Argentina	Peru	
Mestizo	5.85	5.95	5.43	5.73	5.75
White	5.3	5.62	5.24	5.55	5.43
Combined	5.7		5.47		

well. Additionally, the mean value of support is consistently higher for Peruvians than Argentines. The differences between combined averages are statistically significant (using one-tailed significance tests). This suggests that Chileans are more supportive of immigrants pursuing visas if they are engineers, ethnic minorities, or come from Peru. However, this basic analysis does not fully account for the unique structure of the data. Because each respondent is asked the same question twice, analyzing these repeated measures is appropriately done by using a multi-level model.<sup>14</sup> In this case, there are two observations for each respondent (*second level*). The characteristics of each immigrant and whether it was the first or second immigrant evaluated constitute the independent variables at the first level. The second level accounts for respondent-level factors that could shift the mean level

14. See Harell et al. (2012) who use a similar approach to analyze a repeated measures immigration experiment.

Table 5 Visa support based on immigrant characteristics

Parameters	Random intercept
Engineer	0.212** (0.094)
Argentina	-0.245*** (0.094)
White	-0.309*** (0.094)
Order	-0.244*** (0.094)
Constant	5.881*** (0.120)
<hr/>	
Variance components	
Immigrant level ( $\delta^2$ )	1.381*** (0.110)
Respondent level Constant ( $\tau_{00}$ )	1.063 *** (0.150)
<hr/>	
Observations	630
Number of groups	315
$-2 \times$ Log-likelihood	2284.783

Standard errors in parentheses.

\*\*\*p < .01; \*\*p < .05.

of visa support between respondents. This modeling strategy permits an evaluation that accounts for both within-unit and between-unit variation that is more readily interpretable than repeated measures ANOVA (Harell et al. 2012). Table 5 shows the results from the random intercept model. I include a dichotomous variable to account for the order in which the immigrants were evaluated and the possible decline in support for the second immigrant being evaluated.<sup>15</sup>

Even though the dichotomous choice data suggest that an immigrant's ethnicity and employment interest are influential in shaping a respondent's choices about immigrants pursuing work visas, the assessments of general work-visa support for each immigrant indicate that all three immigrant characteristics are important predictors of visa support. On average, immigrants receive higher levels of visa support if they are from Peru, are a minority, or are an engineer.

The results indicating greater support for engineers mirror recent findings that citizens generally prefer high-skilled labor (Hainmueller, Hiscox, and Margalit 2011; Hainmueller and Hiscox 2010; Harell et al. 2012). Given that this particular sample is highly educated—almost 45 percent report having a graduate degree—it provides a strong test of one side of the economic threat perspective. If highly educated professionals fear job competition from other skilled individuals,

15. The results indicate that if the immigrant appeared second, the respondent would on average lower their visa support by 0.24 points on a 7-point scale.

we would expect them to have lower support for high-skilled or well-trained immigrants. I further examine this relationship in two ways. First, I include the respondent's educational level as a second-level variable to estimate visa support. (See appendix, table A.4.) In this first model, the education of the respondent is insignificant. To more accurately test the competition hypothesis, I then interact the respondent's education with the dichotomous variable (*Engineer*) indicating the immigrant's employment objective. The interaction is insignificant, suggesting that the effect of immigrant skill level is not conditioned by the respondent's level of education.<sup>16</sup> In other words, this sample of Chileans prefers engineers and seems unaffected by any underlying sense of job competition.

Although educational level might serve as a proxy for skill, there is a significant debate about the mechanism through which education affects immigration attitudes: tolerance or economics.<sup>17</sup> To avoid the potentially complex relationship between education and skill, I conduct a more direct test of the labor competition hypothesis. Over 20 percent of respondents reported their occupation as some type of engineer. Given that one of the immigrant characteristics describes the hypothetical immigrant as pursuing work as an engineer, this should provide the most explicit test of job competition among a particular set of skilled workers. To examine this relationship, I compare the mean value of visa support for immigrants looking for work as an engineer (5.33) and immigrants looking for work as a housemaid (5.13), but only among respondents who identified themselves as engineers. Although average support for an immigrant engineer is higher than an immigrant housemaid, the difference is not statistically significant. It does, however, suggest that there is no evidence of heightened animosity among Chilean engineers toward immigrants pursuing engineering work. Thus, even under conditions of explicit competition—common occupation—the results provide little support for economic threat in the form of job competition.

The results associated with country of origin and ethnicity were not exactly expected, at least in terms of direction. So what explains greater support for Peruvian and mestizo immigrants? Respondents were asked an open-ended question to explain their initial choice between immigrants. Twenty open-ended responses suggested they selected the immigrant because the immigrant would benefit more from receiving the visa or had fewer opportunities than the other immigrant. For instance, one female respondent commented: "I think that the Peruvian immigrant needs more help than the Argentine immigrant." Qualitative answers do not necessarily provide a clear statistical basis for believing that Chileans think about immigration in terms of immigrant needs, but they provide an indication of what might be driving this particular relationship. Given that a large majority of respondents are well educated—a function of the university-provided email database—this story would offer supportive evidence for

16. Normally, I would initially model the slope of *Engineer* as a random slope to examine if its effect varies; however, because of the structure of the data, a random slope model is unable to converge. Instead, to check the robustness of the results, I estimate a model that only includes respondents who completed their university education. Under this specification, *Engineer* is still a strong and positive predictor of visa support (results not shown).

17. See Hainmueller and Hiscox (2007) for a description of the debate.

the notion that the more educated are more tolerant.<sup>18</sup> Although these results are somewhat counterintuitive relative to social identity theory and much of the prior research on immigration attitudes, Sirlopu and Oudenhoven (2013) similarly find higher than expected levels of support for multiculturalism in Chile with respect to Peruvian immigrants.

Overall, the results from the dichotomous choice experiment and immigrant-specific evaluations of visa support indicate that Chileans in this study have a strong preference for skilled workers and show no measurable fear related to job competition. Additionally, immigrants' ethnicity and where they come from significantly affect support for individual work visas.

## DISCUSSION

As scholars pursue an increasingly refined understanding of the variation in attitudes to immigration throughout the world, they have largely ignored important immigration centers outside of highly developed countries. Chile is likely to experience a continued increase in immigration over the next decade if its economy continues to grow. The attitudes of Chilean citizens toward the various groups of immigrants that arrive represent an important social issue. And the focus on Chile provides important leverage on the economic competition theory in other immigrant-receiving contexts.

Chileans in this study in some ways appear to be much like their European and American counterparts: in this particular sample they are more supportive of high-skilled than low-skilled immigration. These findings add to the mounting evidence that micro-level economic theories of immigration attitudes are relatively poor predictors of actual attitudes. For those individuals making economic evaluations of immigrants, it seems to be less about how the immigrant affects a person directly and more about what value that immigrant represents economically. In Chile, a country that prides itself on two decades of post-dictatorship economic and democratic success, skilled immigrants may represent a better asset in achieving continued economic development.

This study provides some evidence that Chilean attitudes are not simply driven by economic factors. Among this sample of mostly well-educated Chileans there is greater support for ethnic minority and Peruvian immigrants. Why do we see support for these marginalized groups in terms of immigration? Fetzer (2000) argues that there is greater support for immigrants among individuals from other marginalized groups (racial minorities, minority religions, etc.) because of a shared recognition and sympathy among those outside groups. If education serves to promote greater appreciation and tolerance of outsiders, as Fetzer suggests, it may also generate an understanding of the immigrant experience

18. Some might suggest that the responses are not driven by a preference for Peruvian immigrants but rather distaste for Argentines. However, as I have outlined above, Peruvians do not escape the ire of Chilean stereotypes. There are also long-standing national rivalries between Chile and Peru. (See Sangha 2012 for a summary of the *pisco* rivalry.) Given the negative stereotypes that exist of both Peruvians and Argentines, I have little reason to believe one would exert more influence than the other over Chilean attitudes.



and accompanying marginalization. As one respondent suggests, "It's important to give humble people opportunities so they can help themselves and their families."<sup>19</sup> Just as Americans seem to appreciate the effort made by immigrants to learn English (Hopkins 2014), well-educated Chileans may recognize the effort of certain immigrants to improve their lives. They also may recognize that immigration has a humanitarian quality: it is a means to improve one's life. Unlike the United States, Canada, and some Western European countries, Chile has long been a country of emigration. How that experience influences attitudes toward immigration and whether it helps generate the increased support for certain immigrants as seen in this experiment remains an open question.

### *Study Limitations*

In light of the interesting results that emerged from this study, it is also important to point out the limitations of the approach. This study did not use a nationally representative sample and the results are therefore not necessarily generalizable to a larger population. Given the high level of education in the sample, the study only tests the labor competition hypothesis among skilled workers but does not assess the impact of labor competition among less skilled workers. Further research could use a similar approach but use a purposive sampling approach to target workers in low-skill industries in Chile and test competition at the other end of the skill spectrum.

Additionally, the study uses female immigrants rather than using male immigrants as most other studies of immigration attitudes do. It is possible that male respondents are less threatened by female immigrants in general, therefore influencing the results related to job competition. In Chile, for instance, women and men have similar average educational attainment, but large gender wage gaps still exist (OECD 2012; Tijdens and Van Klaveren 2012). If male respondents do not perceive women as actual competition for employment, then this study would create a noncompetitive framework, therefore setting a very high bar for the labor competition hypothesis. Given the ambiguity around the impact of gender, immigration attitudes research could benefit from an explicit evaluation of the impact that immigrant gender has on attitudes.

Two other important aspects of this experiment are worth noting. First, the experiment focuses on work visas rather than citizenship. The choice to focus on work visas was an attempt to accentuate the dynamics of labor competition rather than other long-term social and economic considerations associated with citizenship. How Chileans would respond to different immigrants pursuing citizenship could potentially involve other factors and thus is an area for future research. Second, the high level of overall visa support among respondents is likely a function of the legal frame used in this immigration scenario. This study does not attempt to discern the difference in attitudes toward documented and undocumented

19. Author's translation. The immigrant the respondent is discussing was depicted as a mestizo Peruvian woman looking for work as a housemaid.

workers in Chile, although in all likelihood undocumented workers would likely generate more anti-immigrant attitudes.<sup>20</sup>

### *Implications*

The results of this study suggest that perceptions of the value an immigrant brings to the overall economy may be critically important to understanding immigration attitudes. This has implications for the treatment of immigrants but also for the type of immigration policy individuals will support. In emerging economies, just as in the United States and Europe, policy makers will likely meet far less opposition to policies permitting highly skilled immigration. Additionally, even in the context of certain shared cultural attributes, an immigrant's national identity and ethnicity are both important in shaping evaluations of immigrants among the well-educated. For scholars studying the United States and Europe, where national identities are often associated with broad cultural and economic stereotypes, it is important to dissect the components underlying these assumptions. To advance our understanding of immigration attitudes, we need to more thoroughly evaluate the various factors often subsumed by national identity.

There is a certain uniformity in patterns of migration throughout the world today: immigrants are not often met with open arms. Yet there is little evidence that what drives those varied and often negative attitudes is related to concerns about labor competition, whether in Chile or in highly developed economies. As migration patterns shift and countries and communities continue to deal with the seemingly inevitable conflict that accompanies immigration, we should be cognizant of the broader economic and cultural calculations that individuals make regarding what constitutes a "desirable immigrant."

### APPENDIX: EXAMPLE OF RANDOMLY ASSIGNED EXPERIMENTAL PAIRING

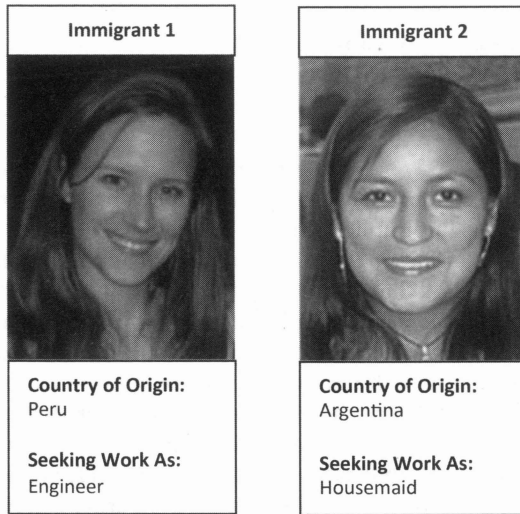
The following description and questions highlight only one of the four randomly assigned immigrant pairings included in the study.<sup>21</sup>

#### Section 3: Immigration

Every year the government must make decisions about who to give visas to so that foreigners are able to live and work in Chile. We would like to get your opinion on who you think should receive a work visa. We are going to show you two photos of immigrants and a description of each one. We would like you to tell us which potential immigrant you would choose to receive a visa to live and work in Chile. We want to make it clear this is a hypothetical exercise

20. See Hood and Morris (1998) for a discussion of the dynamics associated with immigrant documentation and context.

21. I utilized experimental work by Hainmueller and Hopkins (2014) and Harell et al. (2012) to help develop question wording and a general experimental framework. The experiment differs from these comprehensive studies in terms of its focus on certain immigrant characteristics, which are hypothesized to be critical influential factors in the Chilean context. In the experiment, both immigrants are presented in terms of prospective employment and pursuing work visas, which is one form of legal entrance into Chile. To clarify what this means for respondents I describe this form of visa as generally permitting an individual to "live and work in Chile."



and does not impact any real-life decisions. Based on the information provided and your personal opinion, if you had to choose between the two, which potential immigrant should receive a visa to live and work in Chile?

1. On a scale from 1 to 7, where 1 indicates that Chile should absolutely not give the immigrant a visa and 7 indicates that Chile should definitely give the immigrant a visa, how would you rate the first immigrant?

2. On a scale from 1 to 7, where 1 indicates that Chile should absolutely not give the immigrant a visa and 7 indicates that Chile should definitely give the immigrant a visa, how would you rate the second immigrant?

**ROBUSTNESS CHECKS AND ALTERNATIVE SPECIFICATIONS**

*Table A.1 Equality of proportions test among white respondents*

Pairing	Mean
1	0.558 (0.076)
2	0.779*** (0.050)
3	0.241*** (0.056)
4	0.758*** (0.056)

Standard errors in parentheses.  
\*\*\*z < .01; \*\*z < .05.

Table A.2 Immigrant choice as a function of immigrant characteristics among white respondents

Parameters	Logit estimates
Engineer	1.679*** (0.303)
Argentina	-0.782** (0.304)
White	-0.749** (0.304)
Pairing 2	0.164 (0.448)
Pairing 3	0.169 (0.420)
Pairing 4	0.206 (0.421)
Constant	-0.030 (0.407)
<i>N</i>	227
Pseudo R <sup>2</sup>	0.165
Log-likelihood	-130.819

Standard errors in parentheses.

\*\*\*p < .01; \*\*p < .05.

Table A.3 Conditional logit model of immigrant choice as a function of immigrant characteristics

Parameters	Conditional logit estimates
Engineer	1.528*** (0.255)
Argentina	-0.833** (0.254)
White	-0.988*** (0.255)
<i>N</i>	315
Pseudo R <sup>2</sup>	0.162
Log-likelihood	-173.962

Standard errors in parentheses.

\*\*\*p < .01; \*\*p < .05.

Table A.4 Multilevel model of visa support, immigrant characteristics, and respondent education

Parameters	Random intercept	Random intercept and cross-level interaction
Engineer	0.212** (0.094)	-0.590 (0.590)
Argentina	-0.246** (0.094)	-0.240** (0.094)

(continued)

Table A.4 (continued)

Parameters	Random intercept	Random intercept and cross-level interaction
White	-0.309** (0.094)	-0.296*** (0.094)
Order	-0.244** (0.094)	-0.237** (0.117)
Education	0.125 (0.065)	0.068 (0.077)
Education × Engineer	-	0.114 (0.082)
Constant	5.000*** (0.475)	5.386*** (0.552)
<i>Variance Components</i>		
Immigrant Level ( $\delta^2$ )	1.381 (0.110)	1.373 (0.109)
Respondent Level		
Constant ( $\tau_{00}$ )	1.043 (0.149)	1.047 (0.149)
Observations	630	630
Number of groups	315	315
-2 × Log-likelihood	2281.117	2279.228

Standard errors in parentheses.

\*\*\*  $p < .01$ ; \*\*  $p < .05$ .

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